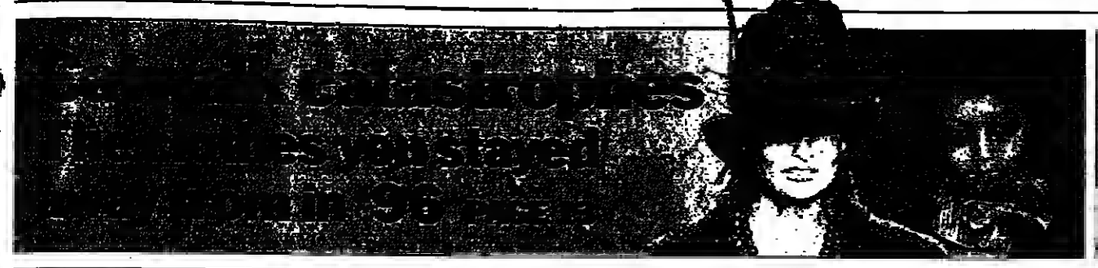
THE INDEPENDENT

Nº 3,181 | TUESDAY 31 DECEMBER 1996 | WEATHER: Very cold | (IR45p) 40p



Middle-of-the-road honours for middle-brow Britain

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Perhaps it will be known as John Major's slippers-and-cardigan list. Cosy, safe, middle-of-the-road, the New Year's honours sum up the Prime Minister's image as a man who enjoys his frozen peas. They smack of a man in his last days of office who wants to say a big "thank you and good-bye" to all those who have kept him entertained along the way.

Step forward, for example, Sir Alec Bedser, 78. Alec was one of the cricketing greats when John was a lad and both still turn out to cheer for Surrey whenever they get a chance. Step forward also Cilla Black and Joan Collins, OBE. While no-one would want to suggest – would they? – that the Prime Minister is a fan, their inclusion on the list does suggest that populist touch for which he is so well-known.

Among three *new life* peers is Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, composer of a string of hit musicals including *Cats*, *Evita* and *Phantom of the Opera*. While Norma spends her nights at the opera, it seems John keeps at least half an eye on the West End.

No-one from the Spice Girls got an honour despite Mr Major's announcement that he would be getting one of their CDs for Christmas, but Paul McCartney did follow up his 1965 MBE with a knighthood. McCartney takes these matters seriously and has treasured his MBE, unlike John Lennon who returned his in protest at Biafra and Vietnam.

The screaming fans who besieged Buckingham Palace 30 years ago will probably be tucked up at home with their cocoa when the former Beatle goes to collect his gong, though. Those ageing rock chicks are probably happier delving into a thriller by Frederick Forsyth or listening to Radio Four comedy with Ned Sherrin, both of whom received CBEs. Or maybe they will be watching a repeat of *Peak Practice*, *Bramwell* or *Soldier, Soldier* on TV, all written by Lucy Gannon, MBE. Or a play by Sir Alan Ayckbourn. Or a tear-jerking rendition of "Gimme the Moonlight," by Frenkie Vaughan, CBE.

Even Terry Wogan, has an OBE despite being an Irish citizen. And it has been a good year for Liverpool, too. Alongside Cilla and Paul on the list is the poet Roger McGough, OBE, who used to play in the band The Scaffold with Paul's brother Mike.

Sporting heroes of the 1990s heve been given a look-in too, with Formula One world champion Damon Hill receiving an OBE and rower Steven Redgrave, who won his fourth Olympic gold medal this year, adding a CBE the MBE he already possesses. Arsenal goal-keeper David Seaman and the former Wigan rugby league star Martin Offiah each get an MBE.

Far be it from John Major to forget the nrdinary man and woman who have done their bit for the community, though. This year 47 per cent of those on the list have been recognised for voluntary service and 44 per cent have been nominated by members nf the public.

Among them are Robert Hopper, a roadworker from Alnwick in Northumberland who receives the MBE along with Arthur George, a school crossing patrolman from Portsmouth, Shirley Everett, a Westminster news vendor and Joaquim Jose Cubertino, head weiter at St Thomas's Hospital.

Inside

'An OBE for Joan Collins? For services to drama?
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Alan Ayckbourn interviewed, *page 15*
Full New Year Honours list, *pages 6,7*

Labour to offer jobless tough choices

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

As part of a radical carrot-and-stick approach to unemployment a Labour government would pay the national minimum wage to the long-term jobless for undertaking community work. If the unemployed refused the jobs offered they would lose large chunks of their state benefits.

The strategy being drawn up by Ian McCartney, the party's chief employment spokesman, is an attempt to break with discredited "schemes" for the jobless where the work was considered meaningless and the training minimal.

The plan involves the concept of the "intermediate labour market" where there is a need for goods and services, but private enterprise cannot satisfy the demand because there is insufficient money to pay for it.

Mr McCartney argues that there is sufficient money already in the system to fund the work and ensure that participants were covered by the same statutory minimum wage as employees in conventional jobs. He believes that the application of the minimum rate is critical to the psychology of those who would participate.

He pointed to the cash already spent on benefits, existing schemes for the lnng-term unemployed, local authority budgets and grants available from European funds.

Ministers will claim that the idea is little different from the Project Work initiative already being piloted which pays the unemployed £10 on top of their benefits – except that Labour's programme will be far more expensive. Sceptics will also warn that organisations operating in the "intermediate labour market" might undercut conventional enterprises and throw other people out of work.

The Centre for Local Economic Strategies calculates that by bringing together budgets for existing schemes into a national fund of £1.7bn, 176,500 jobs a year could be created.

Under a Labour government, the national minimum wage would be set by the Cabinet after taking advice from a Low Pay Commission. It is unlikely that it will be set very high – probably around the £3 to £3.25 an hour mark on current figures – but it would make a substantial difference to most of the unemployed depending on the length of the working week. However, people with a large number of dependents and therefore on high benefits could lose out.

Meanwhile, Labour and the Tories continued to trade insults last night: Tony Blair used his new year's message to accuse John Major of weak leadership; and the Tory party chairman claimed Labour was planning a "dirty" election campaign.

Mr Blair said: "The Prime Minister himself has admitted divisions in his party have damaged Britain's negotiating strength. But people know it is weak leadership that has allowed those divisions to grow and fester."

Tory chairman Brian Mawhinney said in his own message that Labour was gearing up for one of the most negative and deceitful campaigns in recent history.

"They are desperate to stop the electorate from focusing on the success of the economy and what New Labour would do themselves. Labour have always campaigned with the big lie and the big scare story."

Making tracks: Alex Baines, the landlord of the highest pub in Britain, the Tan Hill Inn in Yorkshire, sets out to prepare for a busy, if sub-zero, New Year's Eve Photograph: Graham Lindley

Bleak New Year as ice and snow unite Europe

Stephen Goodwin

New Year revellers face the prospect of sub-zero temperatures and snow on their boots as eastern and southern England shivers on the edge of a Europe-wide cold snap which has killed at least 90 people. In Italy, the Venice lagoon has frozen over and in Russia up to 300 people remain trapped in a tunnel after avalanches.

Snow swept into eastern Kent early yesterday, causing chaos nn roads in the Folkestone and Dover area. But it was late in the day before police "stay at home" warnings sounded credible to motorists elsewhere.

The London Weather Centre expects temperatures to fall to as low as minus 7C tonight – one of the coldest New Year's Eves for 20 years – over much of England and barely rise to freezing on New Year's Day. With clear skies, it will be even colder in Scotland. But it is the Home Counties, rather than the Highland ski resorts, that are in line for most of the snow.

The charity Crisis said it would keep open one of its London Christmas shelters, scheduled to close yesterday, in response to the severe weather. The shelter, in Hackney, east London, will house at least 30 people. Regional shelters will also stay open.

The freezing temperatures brought predictable complaints about the inadequacies of the Department of Social Security's cold weather payments scheme. A group of Labour MPs is due to protest to John Majnr today about the "failure" of the system to help the poorest pensioners.

Payments are triggered when the average temperature has been at freezing or below for seven consecutive days, or weather stations predict such temperatures. Since Christmas, 18 areas have met the criteria, triggering payments totalling £6.4m to nearly 700,000 people.

In the Cairngorm mountains, two missing teenage snowboarders were picked up safe and well by a search helicopter yesterday morning. Peter Lawlor, 16, from North Kessock, Invernesshire, and Neil Thomson, 17, from Inverness, lost their way in mist on Sunday and were aided by a climbing party from England.

Elsewhere in Europe, avalanches have trapped up tn 300 people and their vehicles for days in a tunnel in Russia's Caucasus mountains. Two women had given birth while in the tunnel and one new-born baby had died of the cold.

In Romania, according to official sources, 20 people froze to death in blizzards. Unofficial reports said 24 – mainly the elderly and homeless – had died in Bucharest alone. In Russia 245 people have been admitted to hospital with frostbite and 10 have died. In Poland, Warsaw has recorded near-record low temperatures of minus 21C.

Flights had to be cancelled from Frankfurt because of snow, ice brought shipping to e helt on the Elhe and the Danube and skis proved the best way to get around the Umbrian capital nf Perugia.

Alcohol played a part in many of the tragedies, particularly fnr down-and-outs. But a drunken teenage couple in Austria had better luck. They were found comatose in the snow by a Red Cross worker behind a snack stall at a ski race et Semmering where the temperature was minus 22C.

QUICKLY

Anger over Kinkel
Germany's Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, came under fire from politicians of all parties for saying Germany would prefer pro-Europeans to win the general election. Pages 2 and 14

Food recalled
The supermarket chain Scotmid was accused of scare-mongering after withdrawing a large oumber of products in the wake of the E. coli epidemic. Page 2

Hebron hope
Israeli and Palestinian negotiators remained confident that agreement over Hebron was imminent. Page 9

Hundreds killed by train bomb

Jan McGirk
New Delhi
and agencies

Three hundred people were feared dead last night after a bomb blasted through crowded railway cars and toppled another three oo their sides in Assam, north-east India. Officials combed through the twisted metal remains where passengers had been preparing to bunk down in three-tier sleepers.

Police suspect Bodo separatists of planting the powerful bomb which ripped the Brahmaputra Express train apart. Many of the estimated 1,200 people on board were burned or injured by the impact. No responsibility for the bomb was claimed by either of two militant groups active in the region – the Bodo guerrillas, or the United Liberation Front of Assam.

Violence against millions of landless immigrants who crossed the jungle borders from Bangladesh into India's north-east state has triggered unrest in the area for the past 25 years. By acting as vigilantes against illegal settlers, armed tribal separatists have caused frequent headaches in New Delhi. Yet, until this week, insurgency in the area was thought to be under cootrol.

The blast came a day after tribal Bodo guerrillas blew up a road bridge that formed the main link between India's north-east regions and the rest of the country, injuring seveo people.

Activists representing Bodo tribesmen living north of the Brahmaputra river want a homeland within India in the state of Assam. An extremist fringe, the Bodoland Army, has been fighting for e separate nation since 1989.

Most of the passengers were believed to be holiday-makers heading for Delhi to celebrate the new year. More than 5,000 people have beeo killed in Assam in ethnic and separatist violence in the last three years.

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significant shorts

Bones found in farm funeral pyre

What are believed to be pieces of human bone have been found in the remains of a "funeral pyre" at a remote east Devon farm where businessman Derek Levon shot himself in front of armed police, it emerged yesterday.

Detectives trying to trace 61-year-old Mr Levon's cancer-stricken wife Pauline are now trying to establish whether there is any link between the remains found in the fire, and those discovered in a tin box in the boot of his car after last Friday's suicide.

The latest discovery was made as detectives searched an area of scorched earth on grazing land at his West Yeo Moor Farm, near Witheridge.

Rise in unfair dismissal claims

The number of unfair dismissal cases heard at industrial tribunals rose by almost a half between 1991-92 and 1995-96.

In the year to March 1996, 9,936 unfair dismissal cases were heard at industrial tribunals in England and Wales, up almost 46 per cent from 6,809 in 1991-92. The number of successful verdicts increased by almost a quarter to 3,803 from 3,043. Labour's chief employment spokesman Ian McCartney said: "When he became Prime Minister, John Major said he wanted to create a country at ease with itself. These figures show that the Tories have created a country in fear of its future."

Mystery baby's mother found

The mother of a baby found by a newspaper delivery boy on Boxing Day has been traced. The child was abandoned in a hedge in Gateshead with her umbilical cord still intact. A spokesman for Northumbria police said: "We have established the identity of the mother of the baby. However, she has yet to be interviewed in order to establish the exact circumstances which led to the baby being abandoned."

Killer fireworks still on sale

New Year revellers could be putting their lives at risk by using dangerous imported fireworks, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman Nigel Griffiths warned. Despite the Government's ban on the aerial shells – the fireworks responsible for three deaths over the 5 November celebrations – Mr Griffiths said stocks were still available.

Leading actor joins anti-EU campaign

The UK Independence Party has attracted its biggest celebrity supporter so far in *Rumpole of the Bailey* actor, Leo McKern.

McKern, who will feature in the party's pre-election broadcast, is a former Tory voter who, according to the UKIP, "can no longer support John Major's insistence of putting party before country". The party is portraying itself as the only true vote for anyone wanting Britain to withdraw from the EU. Unlike Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party, the UKIP proposes withdrawal without a referendum.

Holidaymakers on way home

Three hundred British holidaymakers, stranded in the Dominican Republic because of a ventilation fault on their charter aircraft, were due to arrive home in the early hours of this morning. The Thomson package tourists had spent the previous night at hotels in the capital, Santo Domingo. Their aircraft was expected to arrive from Gatwick at 4am – 21 hours behind schedule. *Simon Calder*

Rape victims relive ordeal

The victims of a horrific Boxing Day double rape are to take part in interviews with a police artist over the next few days to help draw up an E-fit likeness of their attacker.

The rapist attacked a 53-year-old woman and her nine-year-old daughter in the early hours of Boxing Day in a west London flat where they were visiting relatives. Police appeals for information have prompted a few calls from the public, but no significant breakthroughs have yet been made, said a Scotland Yard spokesman.

A strong suit in informality

Most men would prefer to wear casual clothes at work rather than a formal suit and tie, a new survey has found.

One in three men still have to wear a formal grey or blue suit at work, with just 13 per cent allowed a discreet splash of colour. Formal suits were least popular in the North and South-west and most liked in the South-east, the poll of 800 workers for shaving company Philishave found. The most conservative men dressers were in the South-east and the Midlands, where 40 per cent were required to wear a suit, white shirt and tie.

Winter watch: Warden Dave Hunter keeps a look-out for salmon poachers near Winchester, Hampshire. The fish are vulnerable at this time of year as they make their way upstream to spawn. Photograph: Emma Boam

Store is accused on E.coli scare

Steve Boggan
Chief Reporter

A supermarket chain was accused of scaremongering yesterday when it advised customers to return a whole array of products – including bread – in the wake of the Scottish *E. coli* epidemic.

Health officials described the move as unwarranted. Edinburgh-based Scotmid placed advertisements in newspapers offering to accept the return of cold meats, cooked pies, bakery products and uncooked sausages bought from any of its 61 outlets across Scotland.

Only four of its supermarkets had been identified as having stocked products made by John M Barr and Sons of Wishaw, where the outbreak allegedly originated. MPs for the region said they were mystified by the decision. Dr John Reid, Labour MP for Motherwell North, said: "If 61 outlets were involved instead of four, why weren't we told before now?

"All along, we have been told that only cooked meats were involved in the outbreak. If other products could be affected, why are we being told five weeks into the outbreak? And if they aren't, then why is this supermarket chain causing unnecessary confusion all over Scotland?"

John Brown, spokesman for Scotmid, said the company was merely being cautious on behalf of its customers. "There is a lot of confusion over *E. coli* and we are just playing on the safe side. From the beginning, we have told our customers we would be prepared to accept the return of any goods they were worried about.

"Last week, a board meeting decided to extend that offer across all our stores and to include frozen products. After all, who knows what might be lurking at the back of the freezer?" He denied the operation may have been a public relations exercise that had backfired.

Today, Professor Hugh Pennington, who leads the inquiry into the outbreak, is due to present his preliminary findings to the Secretary of State for Scotland, Michael Forsyth.

Last night, the Scottish Office said there had been no new confirmed cases of *E. coli* poisoning since 20 December. So far, 409 people have shown symptoms of the illness, while 258 have been recorded as confirmed cases.

'Goodwill message' from Germany sparks storm

Tony Barber
Europe Editor

The first British-German dispute of 1997 broke out yesterday even before the new year had rung out the old. German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel came under fire from politicians of all major parties after he indicated that Germany would prefer pro-Europeans to win the general election.

"A general election will be held in Britain no later than May. The country must create clarity about its European policy," Mr Kinkel said. "Britain is part of Europe. Europe needs Britain."

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's centre-right coalition has never concealed its desire that Britain play a more positive role in the European Union. However, Mr Kinkel's statement, which appeared as part of a new year's message summarising key issues for German foreign policy in 1997, was unusually blunt for a minister to make publicly about another country, especially a close ally.

Pro-Europeans said they feared that the statement might play into the hands of Euro-sceptics, who are keen to portray continental Europeans as hullies and busybodies issuing instructions to Britain. Even Paddy Ashdown, the unambiguously pro-European Liberal Democrat leader, criticised Mr Kinkel, saying his remarks were "unhelpful and almost certainly unwise".

The German foreign ministry denied the statement represented interference in British politics and said that it had been intended as an expression of goodwill: "In a European Union which aspires to become a political union, interference in [another country's] internal affairs is by definition hardly possible. But even if it were possible, it is certainly not intended," a spokesman said. "Britain must become clear on what depth of integration it wants to reach and, as Mr Kinkel said, we want Britain to be among those countries which, together with others, achieve as deep an integration as possible."

Klaus Kinkel: 'Britain must create clarity about its European policy'

Conservative Party chairman Brian Mawhinney seized on Mr Kinkel's remarks as evidence that Britain's EU partners wanted a Labour victory rather than the re-election of a Tory government, which he said would "defend British interests". And he accused Labour leader Tony Blair of having "already said that ultimately he will do what the other European leaders tell him".

Labour ridiculed the assertion but said Mr Kinkel should not have made his comments. Alistair Darling, Labour's Treasury spokesman, said: "It is up to the British people to choose their next government. Klaus Kinkel's comments are a kind of desperate message from Europe that there is a British case to be put, and that British case is not being put just now because the Conservatives have weak leadership."

Minister who says the unsayable

Tony Barber

Klaus Kinkel is, as they say, no stranger to controversy. A trained lawyer and civil servant, he became Germany's Foreign minister in May 1992 and quickly earned a reputation for impatience and saying the unsayable in public.

Exasperated by the inability of German and other Western governments to end the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, Mr Kinkel, 60, once said: "One can be filled with cold rage because of one's helplessness."

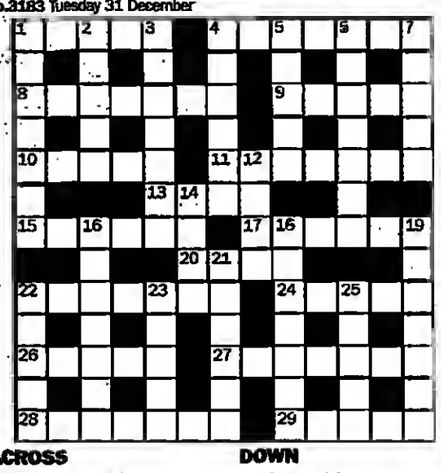
His outspokenness forms a contrast to the quiet but effective diplomacy of his predecessor, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who served 18 years as foreign minister. Only last week Mr Kinkel issued a public warning to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia not to crack down on opposition street protests, saying: "He should keep his hands off the rights of the demonstrators."

However, Mr Kinkel's new year's message, with its implicit appeal to Britons to vote for pro-Europeans in next year's general election, was not especially controversial in Germany. Most politicians there would heartily concur that Germany wants Britain to overcome its internal divisions on Europe so it can join in building the European Union.

For all his brusqueness, Mr Kinkel is seen as something of a lightweight in domestic German politics. It is unlikely that he would have become Foreign minister were it not that he belonged to Mr Genscher's Free Democrats (FDP), the junior centrist coalition partner of Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU). Yet he did not even join the FDP until 1991, and during his two-year spell as the party's leader from June 1993 the FDP came close to electoral oblivion.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3183 Tuesday 31 December



ACROSS
1 Purchaser (5)
4 Soundly reasoned (7)
8 Wash (7)
9 Part of shoe (5)
10 Contend (5)
11 Tidal river mouth (7)
13 Peer (4)
15 Planet (6)
17 Tree-lined approach (6)
20 Title (4)
22 Hide (7)
24 Recess (5)
26 Conclude (5)
27 Rich (7)
28 After due time (7)
29 Go into (5)

DOWN
1 Songs (7)
2 Of tender years (5)
3 British ruminant (3,4)
4 Food store (6)
5 Haggard (5)
6 Team leader (7)
7 Goods vehicle (5)
12 Shut noisily (4)
14 Former Indian coin (4)
16 Melodic (7)
18 Undertaking (7)
19 Voter (7)
21 Nut tree (6)
22 Ascend (5)
23 White heron (5)
25 Play unfairly (5)

Solution to Saturday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Witch, 4 Whey (Which way?), 8 Unicorn, 9 Eagle, 10 Tape, 11 Hysteria, 12 Fortune-teller, 15 Tiresome, 17 Ruby, 20 Libra, 21 Laundry, 22 Flat, 23 Notes. DOWN: 1 Whimper, 2 Tool, 3 Honeydew melon, 4 Wrestle, 5 Eiger, 6 Suet, 7 Repair, 12 Futile, 13 Upstart, 14 Lourdes, 16 Rebel, 18 Yo-yo, 19 Quit.

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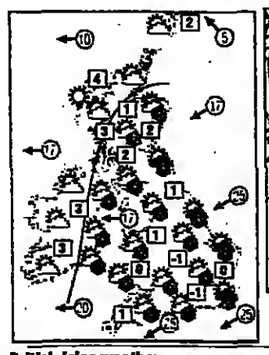
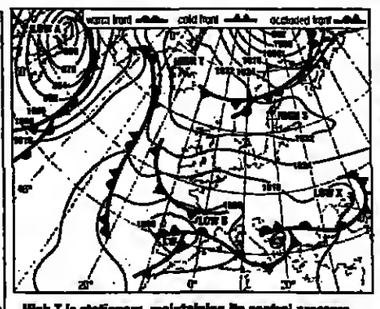




High T is stationary, maintaining its central pressure, while High S declines. Lows U and W move slowly east.

British Isles weather

yesterday, midday (GMT) c cloudy, cl clear, f fair, fg fog, hz haze, m mist, r rain, s sunny, sl sleet, sh showers, sn snow, th thunder

		C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F
Aberdeen	sn	7	37	Brighton	s	3	37	Exeter	c	2	36	Liverpool	f	4	39
Anglesey	sn	5	41	Bristol	f	3	37	Hazel	c	5	41	London	sn	3	36
Ayr	f	4	39	Cardiff	sn	3	37	Glasgow	f	4	39	Manchester	sn	3	37
Belfast	sn	3	37	Carlisle	c	3	37	Guernsey	f	4	39	Newcastle	c	2	36
Birmingham	sn	2	36	Dover	sn	1	34	Inverness	f	5	41	Oxford	sn	2	36
Blackpool	f	3	37	Dublin	sn	5	41	Isles of Scilly	c	6	43	Plymouth	f	5	41
Bournemouth	f	3	37	Edinburgh	sn	4	39	Jersey	f	5	41	Rhoose	f	5	41
Scarborough	c	1	34	Southampton	f	2	36	Stornoway	c	6	43	Tiree	f	6	43
Southend	f	1	34	Swansea	c	6	43	York	sn	2	36				

world weather

*previous day's figure at local time

		C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F
Akrotiri	s	17	63	*Buenos Aires	s	32	90	Islamabad	s	16	61	*Mexico City	fr	17	63
Alexandria	s	20	68	Cairo	s	13	55	Istanbul	sn	11	52	*Miami	—	—	—
Algiers	s	12	54	*Calgary	sn	-24	11	Jakarta	f	31	88	Milan	m	3	38
Alicante	s	15	59	Cape Town	f	19	66	Jeddah	s	27	81	Moshoeshoe	f	31	88
Amsterdam	sn	3	37	*Caracas	s	26	79	*Jerusalem	—	—	—	*Montreal	fg	2	36
*Anchorage	sn	-12	10	Casablanca	s	16	61	Johannesburg	s	18	64	Moscow	f	-16	3
Athens	s	16	61	*Chicago	sn	1	30	Karachi	s	22	72	Munich	c	-10	14
Auckland	f	13	55	Christchurch	c	13	55	Kathmandu	s	16	61	Nairobi	f	25	77
Bahrain	s	21	70	Cologne	sn	-1	30	Kiev	s	-12	10	Naples	sn	7	45
Bangkok	f	33	91	Copenhagen	sn	-2	28	*Kingston	s	30	86	*Nassau	s	25	77
*Barbados	c	27	81	Corfu	r	15	59	Kuala Lumpur	s	29	84	New Delhi	s	20	68
Barcelona	c	5	41	Dakar	s	24	75	Los Palmas	c	27	81	*New Orleans	f	19	66
Beirut	f	13	55	Darwin	f	27	81	*Lima	s	25	77	*New York	—	—	—
Belgrade	s	-9	16	Dhahran	s	17	63	Lisbon	c	13	55	Nice	f	9	52
Berlin	s	-9	16	Dublin	f	11	52	Luxembourg	f	2	36	Nicosia	s	18	64
*Bermuda	s	22	72	Florence	c	7	34	*Los Angeles	f	14	57	Oslo	s	-7	19
Biarritz	f	1	34	Frankfurt	sn	-7	19	Luxembourg	sn	-5	23	Paris	sn	-1	30
*Bogota	f	17	63	Funchal	c	17	63	Madrid	m	4	39	Peking	s	3	37
Bombay	s	32	90	Geneva	sn	-4	25	Majorca	r	9	43	Perth	s	30	82
Budapest	sn	-1	30	Gibraltar	sn	12	54	Malaga	f	15	59	*Port Stanley	s	12	54
Brisbane	s	33	91	Harare	fr	17	63	Malta	f	17	63	Prague	m	-15	5
Brussels	sn	1	34	Helsinki	sn	-8	18	Manila	s	26	79	Reykjavik	c	5	41
Bucharest	sn	6	43	Hong Kong	s	23	73	Mecca	s	23	73	Rhodes	s	15	59
Budapest	sn	-1	30	*Honolulu	s	25	77	Melbourne	s	16	61	*Rio de Janeiro	f	32	90
Riyadh	s	23	73	Rome	m	3	37	Salzburg	sn	-10	14	*S Francisco	sn	15	59
*Santiago	s	28	82	Seoul	c	7	45	Singapore	fr	30	86	Stockholm	sn	-5	23
Strasbourg	sn	-7	19	Sydney	c	18	64	Taipei	s	21	70	Tel Aviv	s	11	52
Tenerife	s	21	70	Tokyo	s	15	59	*Toronto	s	0	32	Tunis	f	15	59
Valencia	s	9	48	*Vancouver	sn	-5	23	Venice	c	-11	12	Vienna	sn	-11	12
Warsaw	m	-14	7	*Washington	c	12	54	Wellington	s	9	48	Zurich	sn	-7	19

forecast for today

Extremely cold over England and Wales with sunny spells and snow showers. The heaviest and most frequent will be in the east with the best of the sunshine in the west. The stiff east wind will produce a severe chill factor with temperatures barely reaching freezing. N Ireland and Scotland will be marginally less cold with the brightest weather in the west and a few snow showers near east facing coasts and hills.

outlook for the next few days

New Year's Day will also be very cold with heavy snow showers in counties bordering the North Sea, but many western areas will become dry and bright after early snow showers the out. On Thursday and Friday it will stay cold with severe night frosts. Most western areas will be dry with sunshine, but scattered snow showers are expected in the north and east. It may turn a little less wintry over the weekend.

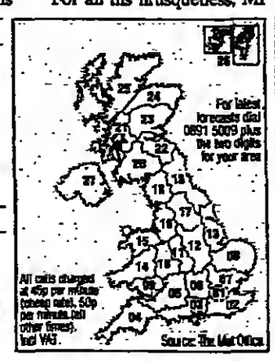
air quality

Yesterday's Readings	NO_2	SO_2
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Moderate
Outlook for Today		
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Moderate

high tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	5.12	6.4	17.47	6.4
Liverpool	2.45	8.4	15.02	8.3
Avonmouth	10.35	11.3	22.57	11.0
Hull (Albert Dock)	9.55	6.5	21.57	6.5
Greenock	4.25	3.2	16.22	3.4
Oban Lagchaire	3.18	3.6	15.35	3.6

Height measured in metres



For latest forecasts dial 0891 5009 plus the two digits for your area

All calls charged at 45p per minute (cheap rate), 50p per minute (all other times) incl VAT.

Source: The Met Office

Independent Weatherline

For the latest forecasts dial **0891 5809** followed by the two digits for your area indicated by the above map.

Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 45p per min (cheap rate) 50p per min (all other times) inc VAT

Out and about with AA Roadwatch

Call **0336 401777** for the latest local and national traffic news.

Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 45p per min (cheap rate) 50p per min (all other times) inc VAT.

sun and moon

Sun rises	8.06
Sun sets	16.01
Moon rises	23.09
Moon sets	11.00

Full moon: 9 January

lighting-up times

London	16.01 - 8.06
Bristol	16.11 - 8.16
Birmingham	16.04 - 8.18
Manchester	15.59 - 8.25
Newcastle	15.48 - 8.31
Glasgow	15.53 - 8.47
Belfast	16.08 - 8.46

Forget tonight, what will you be doing on New Year's Eve 1999?

Glenda Cooper

As you gear up for tonight's festivities, your thoughts may well turn to seeing in the new millennium. But unless yon have already booked your celebrations – or have the odd million pounds to spare – you are probably too late.

It was as far back as 1989 that Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, told an Arts Council lunch: "If it is at all possible, purchase an option on any dance hall you can find for the night of 31 December, 1999."

Seveo years on, many hig venues have been snapped up. Forget Tower Bridge – it was booked this year.

Madame Tussaud's has already gooe and the Royal Albert Hall was reserved as far hack as 1975. The QE2 has already been grabbed by the Millennium Society of Washington for a 20-day cruise at an estimated £300,000 a day and even DisneyWorld, in Florida, has sold out its 17,000 hotel rooms.

And for those spectacular places left, the competitioo may rule oot all hut the most wealthy.

A spokesmao for British Airways said that it had been inundated with inquiries for Concorde seats but had yet to start taking bookings. Your chances of acquiring a flight however are slim. There is already "a list as long as the M4" according to BA and the cost for an aeroplane carrying100 people "will start in five figures".

"We will be chartering seven aircraft," said the BA spokesman. "We are thinking of having a triple celebratioo, one in the UK, one mid-air and ooe io New York, but we will be making a decision later as to tbe best way."

Edinburgh, which this oew year will play host to more than half a million visitors, is also looking to be ooe of the premium millennial cities, with the Virgin Group sponsoring the 1999 Hogmanay Festival.

This year alone demand for hotel rooms in the city was so great that some of the visitors have had to be placed in accommodation up to 50 miles away.

Hotels and bed-and-breakfasts have already received bookings for 1999 but organisers are playing their cards close to their chest as to what will happen on that New Year's Eve.

"We have not announced what will happen yet," said Abigail Carney, spokeswoman for *Uniqoe Eveots*. "But Edinburgh wants to be one of the millennium cities and will definitely be a great place to be at that party."

The Savoy Hotel in London could have been booked twice or three times over but at present is oot taking reservations until it has decided what exactly will take place that night. The New York Marriott hotel got its first reservation in 1983 – two years before it was built.

Sadly for football fans, Wembley Stadium has ruled out anyone being able to book it for the big event. "We have had lots of inquiries," a spokesman said. "Now we have the national stadium it would be possible to have one of the world's biggest parties but it is oot available."

Out with a bang: Fireworks explode over Edinburgh Castle during a New Year celebration. The city has yet to decide on what it will do in 1999

The 50th floor of Canary Wharf Tower, the tallest building in Britain, is similarly out of bounds.

For the more adventurous, the Pyramids are sure to be a hit as is the Grand Canyoo, although hotels there are not taking bookings until 1998.

According to William Deakin of the party organisers Juliana's, one enterprising individual has booked an island in the Maldives although more impractical ideas such as a party in Lapland have had to be turned down by the company.

However, there are some venues still available for the determined party-goer. The Science Museum is still taking bookings for its different galleries which normally go at around £4,500, but are likely to fetch higher prices for New Year's Eve.

The Millennium of Loodon cruiser, launched by the Queen in October, is also considering "something spectacular" which will probably work out at £500 per person.

However the prize for the most eoterprising bid to see in the millennium goes to the tiny nation of Kiribati in the Sooth Pacific. It quietly moved the International Date Line to its eastern extremity, Carolioe Island, in 1993, trumping its Pacific oeighbours to be the first to usher in the oew millennium.

Tonga, which was happily expecting lucrative parties at the Internatiooal Date Line Hotel in Nukualofa, is oot amused. Neither are the Chatham Islands, for as a result of the move Kiribati will now see in the millennium 22 minutes before the Chathams, and 80 minutes before Tooga.

But despite protests, the Royal Greenwich Observatory and cartographers have accepted Kiribati's line change, and appeals to the United Nations bave met with the response that the date line, decided in 1884, is beyond its control.

Pacific islands aside, most of us however will be trying to have the time of our lives in the most exotic place we can afford. See you at Trafalgar Square.

Del Boy makes a plonker of ITV

Marianne Macdonald
Media Correspondent

The BBC rounded off its Christmas victory on Sunday with a final episode of *Only Fools And Horses* which attracted more viewers than any programme of 1996, including *Euro 96*.

The farewell to Del Boy and Rodney had 22.1m viewers at its peak and triggered the year's largest power surge. Overnight figures – which do not include those who videoed the comedy – were 21.5m, reaching 22.1m in the final half-hour. That was four million more than the England vs Germany match in *Euro 96*.

It won more viewers even than the Christmas Day episode of *Only Fools And Horses*, watched live by 18.7m people, or the December 27 episode, watched by 18.45m. Together they were the top three programmes of the Christmas period, the BBC said.

After the Trotters said farewell on Suoday, viewers caused a 1,600-megawatt power surge as they made tea and coffee – enough to power Birmingham for 15 minutes, a National Grid spokesman said.

He added: "It was the biggest power surge of the year. The usual surge following an edition of a top programme like *EastEnders* is something between 800 and 1,000 megawatts. It is unusual for a non-sporting programme to get such a reaction — but Del Boy aod Rodney actually heat the *Euro 96* matches."

The biggest recorded power surge was 2,800 megawatts, following England's World Cup semi-final peoalty sboot-out against Germany in 1990.

Yesterday the BBC hailed the success of the comedy which has seen seven series and 12 Christmas specials since it started in 1981. "We're delighted this proved a triple treat for our viewers," a spokeswoman said.

ITV fought back with 11.9m viewers for its James Bond film, *The Living Daylights*, but with eight of the top 10 programmes on Christmas Day alooe, the BBC emerged the victor in the holiday ratings battle.

This party will be literally dynamite

David Usborne
New York

For years, New York has dominated the attentioo of America on New Year's Eve. Brash Las Vegas was left out. Now, the Nevada city has come up with an unbeatable way of attracting everybody's attention: blowing up a buge botel as the crowning momeot of a fireworks display.

New Year's Eve in New York's Times Square could be a bit of a let-down tonight. (The main attraction, as always, will be the dropping of a giant, sparkling ball at midnight). In Las Vegas, however, the entrance of 1997 promises to be dynamite, with the implosion of an 11-storey, 900-room hotel oo the Strip.

With a little belp from the ageing Hacienda Hotel and a firm of demolitioo experts, the desert city may this year liave found the ideal gimmick finally to eclipse the Big Apple. Earmarked for destruction to make way for a oew 4,000-room gambling resort, tbe once-grand but now faded Hacienda will serve initially as the scaffold for a giant fireworks display with a glittering waterfall of light that will run the length of the building. At midnight – Eastern Time – the pyrotechnics will culminate with a loud bang: a fireball will erupt from the hotel roof, after which the eotire structure will be reduced to dust in front of an expected 300,000 revellers.

The decision to send the Hacienda to Hotel Heaven at midnight Eastern Time – 9pm in Nevada – is officially explained as a police tactic to minimise the risk of drunken antics on the Strip later in the evening. Clearly, however, the timing is also meant as a direct challenge to New York.

"You can always stand in Times Square and watch the ball drop, but I think we offer a little more diversification in things that are fun," Kara Kelley of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce said yesterday. "Coming to Las Vegas on New Year's Eve is now something that people put on their calendar".

New York is trying to fight hack. This year, the Times Square ball will be bigger and brighter than before and a light and laser show is also promised. But already one TV network – Rupert Murdoch's Fox chain – has opted to forsake the familiar Times Square fare for the big kaboom in the Nevada desert.

Fares are slashed in new railway race to north

Louise Jury

Nipping north for Hogmanay will be far cheaper in future as ooe of the new railway companies announced a cut-price London to Edinburgh fare of £19 yesterday.

Though oext Sunday's start date is too late for a Caledonian New Year, the move by the Great North Eastern Railway (GNER) was welcomed by other rail operators as proof that privatisation was good oews for travellers.

But it also signalled a fight back against air competitors which have given the railways a run for their money. EasyJet has offered £29 single fares from Luton airport, north of London, to Scotland.

Where in the days of steam, the great race to the north pitted rival rail companies against each other for the fastest time to Scotland, the battle a ceotury later is over prices, witb train and plane the bitter rivals.

The GNER will introduce the new rate from Sunday on trains from London's Kings Cross to Edinburgh, Motherwell and Glasgow on the former InterCity East Coast line, British Rail's old flagship route.

The move should reverse the advantage between rail and the cheapest air routes. The cheapest previous one-way fare from London to Edinburgh or Glasgow price was £45. The cost of travelling to Dundee will also be cut to £23 from £54 and for Aberdeen or Inverness the price will also be £23, compared with £59, as long as tickets are booked seven days in advance. A single National Express coach ticket to Edinburgh is £13.

Flying Scotsman: The battle with the airlines revives the competitive spirit of the great age of steam.

Christopher Garnett, GNER's chief executive, said: "Nobody else can offer better value for money. Going by rail is cheaper than flying, much quicker than coach travel and, at this price, a real alternative to taking the car. With these new fares we aim to show that rail travel to Scotland is not as expensive as people believe."

The introduction of the heavily discounted fares from London follows the recent success of similar tickets from Scotland. GNER claimed it attracted thousands of passeogers to choose the train in preference to the plane.

However, an EasyJet spokesman said they had carried 500,000 passengers in 1996 and would increase capacity to 1 millioo next year. "These people have come from somewhere," he said.

GNER's price cuts were a sign they were proving a challenge, the EasyJet spokesman said. But as a quarter of its day returns were business travel, mainly to Edinburgh, it was not unduly worried. "It's pushing it to do a day return rail trip to Scotland".

Price cuts elsewhere on the rail oetwork were difficult, though oot impossible to find. From tomorrow, Cardiff Railway is to extend a scheme which offers half-price rail travel to unemployed adults to include jobless teenagers.

And Jane Lawrie, of Midland Main Line, said the company receotly introduced a £29 ticket for up to four people going anywhere in its area. "People were very sceptical about privatisation. But fares are certainly not going op and in many cases are going down."

Anglia Railways goes into the private sector on Sunday so has oot not introduced oew fares. But it has cootinued to promote previous cut-price offers such as a £16.50 day return from Norwich to London.

news

First there were the three tenors – then came the bricklayer's son

Marianne Macdonald
Arts Correspondent

Most singers would give their eye teeth to be hotly promoted by a record company, but a television documentary this week offers a chilling insight into the reality of life for opera's latest discovery, Roberto Alagna.

EMI wants this dashing son of a bricklayer is to be the "fourth tenor" in succession to Luciano Pavarotti, José Carreras and Placido Domingo. But viewers of the Channel 4 film this Sunday will be left wondering how anyone can stand up to the schedule such stardom requires.

For EMI, 33-year-old Alagna is a publicist's dream. Born in Paris and discovered in a pizzeria, he had no contact with professional opera until his mid-twenties. After the death of his first wife he got engaged to the beautiful Romanian opera singer, Angela Gheorghiu.

Aimée Gautreau of Angel EMI records reveals his great attraction: "Not only is he a great tenor, he's a hunk. When we first became aware of Alagna's relationship with Angela our first reaction was 'this is a great love story and we should use this'. It's a story the entertainment press is going to want."

In Channel 4's film, Alagna does no less than four recordings for EMI in a year, squeezed into a schedule which never appears to let up. He races from one country to the next trying to fit interviews, launches, rehearsals and recordings around preparation for his much-hyped début at the Metropolitan Opera House.

Is there room for a fourth? The great tenors make a formidable trio. From left, Placido Domingo, José Carreras and Luciano Pavarotti

At one point he bumps into the great tenor whom EMI is grooming him to replace. Pavarotti asks after Alagna's career. "Piano, piano," says Alagna modestly. "Piano forte!" jokes Pavarotti.

But the strain is showing. Alagna walks out during a recording of *Romeo et Juliette* with Gheorghiu in Toulouse. Days later he is forced to drive overnight to Paris to rehearse Jonathan Miller's *La Bohème*. When he arrives he realises he is also booked to sing at a government party. He cancels the rehearsal and arrives at the party, only to find he is too late to perform.

Miller is displeased. "The more highly paid and famous these people become, the faster and looser they play with the schedule," he tells the cameras.

Still the pressure increases with Alagna working 20-hour days in a bid to "please everyone". Later he is forced to cancel performances at Covent Garden, New York and Geneva, citing exhaustion.

Meanwhile, the crucial first night at the Met in April does not go well; Alagna has a cold. The audience are unforgiving. "He's supposed to be the fourth tenor, and that wasn't the voice of the fourth tenor," says one, interviewed during the intermission.

Alagna walks off stage, and the atmosphere is that of a wake, and the film shows Gheorghiu racing after his dejected figure. Back at EMI, however, the executives plot on. They do not see his botched United States début as a problem, and they have a new idea to market his rags to riches rise.

"It's a great Rocky story. I think we should play up on that," says one woman. "Good planning," agrees another.

■ A poll of 1,300 listeners to Classic FM radio revealed yesterday that EMI's promotion of Alagna was not a success – he received four votes to his wife's six and did not make the top 10 ranking, headed by the Swedish tenor Jussi Bjorling, who died in 1960. Domingo came third after the soprano Maria Callas, who died in 1977, while neither Pavarotti nor Carreras made the top ten. Classic FM presenter Hugh Macpherson said it was "extremely telling that our opera buffs have voted resoundingly for performers of the past".

Star in the making: Roberto Alagna is being heavily promoted by EMI, but the road to fame is not entirely smooth Photograph: Clive Barda

Social work shake-up focuses on child abuse

Jojo Moyes

A government White Paper proposing a shake-up in standards among social workers and aimed to curb the risk of child-abuse tragedies is to be published within weeks, it was announced yesterday.

The Secretary of State for Health, Stephen Dorrell, said yesterday that he wanted staff to refocus their efforts, concentrating on potential trouble spots in high-risk families.

Mr Dorrell has been prompted to act by recent well-publicised cases highlighting failures by social workers. He believes that warning signs of potential trouble in families should be vigorously followed up and better understood.

"In good children's services, there isn't a problem, but we need to ensure that services respond quickly and effectively," Mr Dorrell said yesterday. "We need to make certain they are run according to a proper order of priorities and a clear sense of what is important."

He added: "These social workers have some of the most difficult jobs to do and we must acknowledge that and also ensure that they are part of this big social service that is a much more substantial commitment than it was a quarter of a century ago.

> We need a proper order of priorities and a clear sense of what is important'

"It's a question of recognising the signs and responding effectively and quickly, but not becoming a prisoner of political correctness."

The White Paper, to be published next February, follows several child-abuse scandals, including the recent case of Rikki Neave who was cruelly ill-treated by his mother and found killed near his home (a separate report into the way social workers looked after him is due to be published next week) and those uncovered by *The Independent* at children's homes in North Wales.

In June, the Government announced a judicial inquiry into the scandal of the homes in Clwyd, where more than 100 children were abused. At least 12 former residents have died in circumstances related to their experiences.

Children as young as six were abandoned to the care of paedophiles, and were too afraid to talk of their experiences for years, while those who turned to the authorities were often ignored.

Public confidence in social services has diminished because of repeated failures to prevent similar tragedies. Workers have also been accused of unnecessary interventions into family life while failing to prevent real abuses.

The service nationally costs £9bn a year to run – 10 times as much in real terms than 25 years ago and more than all National Health Service family care.

Mr Dorrell said that it was necessary to focus on departments which were not delivering standards that the public was entitled to expect.

"The purpose of the White Paper will be to turn the spotlight on the value for money we get for that huge commitment to social care," he added.

Last month, Mr Dorrell confirmed that ministers were also considering ways in which social workers could be employed by charities and companies instead of local authorities as at present.

Proposals that would map out a future for local authorities as enablers and commissioners of services are also thought to be included in the White Paper.

■ A government Green Paper also due out in the next few weeks will explore ways of providing better care for the mentally ill through improved links between health and social services departments.

Pupils urged to do more at home

Lucy Ward
Education Correspondent

The Government is to issue new guidelines on homework after research found pupils who studied most outside school hours did better in exams.

The guidance, to be published next month, will encourage schools and local authorities to have clear policies stressing the importance of "well-directed" and properly marked homework, though it will stop short of dictating a precise amount of time children should spend studying at home.

Instead, it will provide examples of good practice drawn from a study comparing two groups of secondary schools – seven picked out last year by Chris Woodhead, chief schools inspector, as high flying and seven with an average record.

The research found a clear correlation between exam success and the number of pupils given more than six hours' homework a week.

The Government's move comes a year after David Blunkett, shadow education spokesman, announced that Labour would lay down specific guidelines on homework hours. Mr Blunkett said last night: "All the evidence from overseas is that homework makes the biggest difference in overcoming socio-economic differences in family background."

■ Plans to give parents and teachers greater freedom to set up their own schools from scratch may be included in the Conservative's election manifesto.

Lords leap to defend their old school ties

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

The festive spirit was wearing thin in the great houses of England last night as Labour seized on the sixth day of Christmas to publish a "Tory Lords-a-leaping" report on the privileged backgrounds of hereditary peers.

Far from being in touch with the "common man", as Viscount Cranborne claimed recently, most of the 402 Conservatives who inherited their titles have spent their lives at public school and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, according to the shadow Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

Of these 402 peers, 228 went to Eton and a further 66 to Harrow, Winchester, Stowe, Marlborough, Westminster or Rugby. More than 40 per cent went to Oxford or Cambridge, according to Labour's survey, and only three are women.

Even more embarrassingly, one lord upon whose vote the Government relies owes his title to a £20,000 donation to Conservative Central Office. Lord Vestey's great grandfather bought his peerage with the money in 1922.

Mr Shaw attacked recent remarks in defence of hereditary peers by Lord Cranborne, the Leader of the House of Lords, as "ridiculous." He pointed to the fact that without the help of Tory backwoodsmen the Government would not have been able to force through deeply unpopular policies such as the poll tax and the sale of MoD homes.

"This is not just political satire. It has a serious political purpose for the Tories. It is simply unacceptable for modern British democracy to be conducted in this way," he said.

Viscount Cranborne, the son of the sixth Marquess of Salisbury, was appointed leader of the Lords in 1994. In a lecture earlier this month he defended the existence of amateurs in the House, saying that the Commons was increasingly dominated by professional politicians. "Increasingly the amateur politicians who make up the hereditary peerage are coming to represent the common man in Parliament," he said.

Jack Straw: Attacked Tories as out of touch

Last night Lord Cranborne said things were changing rapidly, and there was no reason why hereditary peers should be out of touch. "You will find that a lot of people who went to Eton have pretty run-of-the-mill jobs these days."

He was not against reform of the House of Lords or even the abolition of hereditary peerages, he added, but Labour's plans were unworkable.

He wanted to see a select committee set up to discuss any changes. "They will create the biggest quango in the land. Quangoes have their place but I think they ought to be controlled by Parliament rather than being part of it," he said.

DAILY POEM

What Every Woman Should Carry

By Maura Dooley

My mother gave me the prayer to Saint Theresa.
I added a used Tube ticket, Kleenex,
several Polo mints (furry), a Tampon, pesetas,
a florin. Not wishing to be presumptuous,
not trusting you either, a pack of 3.
I have a pen. There is space for my guardian
angel, she has to fold her wings. Passport.
A key. Anguish. at what I said/didn't say
when once you needed/didn't need me. Anadin.
A credit card. His face the last time,
my impatience, my useless youth.
That empty sack, my heart. A box of matches.

Today's poem from the volumes shortlisted for the TS Eliot Prize comes from Maura Dooley's second collection, *Kissing a Bone* (Bloodaxe). She is now editing an anthology of love poetry for Bloodaxe, *The Honey Gatherers*.

Education officials told to learn English

Lucy Ward
Education Correspondent

Government education officials are being given lessons in the use of plain English after a study found that the texts of Britain's flagship job-training qualifications were riddled with obscure jargon and mangled grammar.

So far 130 people involved in writing material for National Vocational Qualifications have been sent back to school for "workshops on language issues". They have been taught how to explain NVQs in a way that is more likely to attract potential trainees than to send them scurrying for their dictionaries, or put them off entirely.

In NVQ-speak, information is not given but "imparted", and when a mistake is made the result is not a correction but a "rectifying action". Trainees are expected to "action" tasks and to "originate evidence" – if they can find their way through the literature.

NVQs, launched 10 years ago, offer work-based training in areas ranging from hairdressing to engineering, based on industry-set standards. The Government wanted all employers to offer them by 2000, but so far only 7 per cent do so. By that date, 60 per cent of the workforce were to be trained to NVQ level 3 or equivalent, but only 40 per cent have reached that standard.

A report on NVQs published earlier this year amid fears over standards said that candidates were deterred by "complex, jargon-ridden language", while a computer analysis of the phrases and vocabulary used found they bore little relation to everyday English.

The jargon that leaves students dazed

Two examples of 'performance criteria':

From NVQ level 3 in engineering assembly
'Materials presented to the assembly operation are completely compliant with the operational specification.'

From NVQ level 2 in care
'The forms which discrimination may take and the behaviours which may be expressions of these and that underlie attitudes not restricted to gender that grabs is society.'

Details of the language lessons emerged in a written parliamentary answer from Education and Employment minister James Paice. Mr Paice said that those attending the classes had included 27 officials from the Department for Education and Employment, 56 people from bodies which accredit vocational qualifications, and 47 representatives of industry bodies, including 12 consultants. He confirmed in an answer to the Labour education spokesman Bryan Davies that the cost of the workshops was £116,000.

Researchers analysing the texts of the qualifications on behalf of the department fed all 2 million words from the database of current NVQs into a computer and compared them with a database of 200 million words from newspapers, magazines, books and broadcasting.

The study revealed that details of the standards trainees were expected to reach were often phrased in an opaque or ambiguous way, while the grammar employed dispensed with the tried and tested conventions of subject, verb and object.

Mr Davies yesterday condemned the need to spend taxpayers' money on training officials "how to write properly". He said: "It is quite extraordinary that those responsible for educating people in basic communication skills need to take lessons themselves in how to communicate."

Professor Alan Smithers of Brunel University, a leading critic of NVQs, claimed that confusion had arisen after consultants were used to "translate" standards set by employers into qualifications terminology.

He said: "It gets in the way of what the employers and candidates want and is a big digression from the essential purpose of these qualifications."

Obscure language is one of the key criticisms levelled at NVQs, which have also come under fire for being expensive, too undemanding and unpopular. The qualifications, a central part of the Government's drive to improve Britain's skills base and competitiveness, are to be relaunched this spring in an attempt to increase take-up.

Forests to grow from old greeting cards

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

After a record number of Christmas cards were sent this year, nature conservationists are hoping that they will be recycled into new forests around the country.

Two of Britain's biggest high street names, the Post Office and Boots, are providing collection points on their premises for people to get rid of their cards throughout January and February. The money raised through the recycling effort will fund tree-planting projects.

For the first time the number of items sent through the mail in the four weeks running up to Christmas exceeded 2 billion, and this was dominated by Christmas cards. The figure works out at more than 30 items for every adult and child in the country.

Up till now almost all of these cards have ended up being dumped on landfill sites with the rest of the weekly household refuse. But from Thursday this week 6,200 post offices, one-third of the total in Britain, and all 1,225 Boots stores will take the old cards.

The two organisations have combined with recycling companies to turn them into cardboard packaging material. Experience from previous, smaller-scale Christmas card recycling schemes make them believe that they can collect several thousand tons.

Money raised by the scheme will go to the 12 English Community Forests, the Woodland Trust in Scotland and the British Conservation Trust For Volunteers in Wales and Northern Ireland – all for tree-planting schemes.

The Community Forests are areas on the outskirts of large towns and cities where the Government's Countryside Commission, the Forestry Commission and local councils are collaborating to create new urban fringe woodlands for people and wildlife.

The cards will only fetch a few pounds for each ton recycled, so this grand rescue effort can only raise tens of thousands of pounds, however successful it is. But the organisers argue that theirs is a better alternative than throwing them all away.

Fleet's hope: James Spark, 16, one of the Whitby apprentices, hopes five years' training will make him 'the youngest skipper in the country' Photograph: Steve Forrest/Guzelian

Career that's all at sea

Esther Leach

They shivered in the biting wind that whipped around the harbour and began to doubt whether they had done the right thing. But eight young men had already signed up to become Britain's first port-based apprentice sea fishermen.

They will be trained on trawlers of the Whitby fleet in North Yorkshire whose skippers have volunteered to teach them to ensure their industry survives. Arnold Locker, who runs Locker's Trawlers and owns seven trawlers, said: "Put bluntly, we were going down a sticky road. Our business alone has invested £1m in boats this year but the industry's got such a negative image we couldn't get the new recruits.

"Captains of fishing vessels have a very different job from 10 years ago. Now it's all computers and satellite navigation systems. We need really qualified people running these boats."

At the end of last year several Whitby fishermen approached a training organisation, the Yorkshire and Humber Ports GTA, and secured the support of the North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council.

Rude awakening for air traffic control

Air-traffic controllers with sleep disorders are escaping medical checks and dozing off at work, an expert has claimed.

People with the lives of passengers in their hands are hiding the fact that they have sleep problems because they fear for their jobs, warned Professor Neil Douglas, director of the Scottish National Sleep Laboratory in Edinburgh.

He told the annual meeting of the British Sleep Society in London: "The traditional approach has been to bin patients as people who are either lazy or who don't have a problem. I have had air-traffic controllers, bus drivers and lorry drivers as patients. All of them have admitted that they have fallen asleep doing their job."

But, he said, such people can be successfully treated and carry on working.

Air-traffic controllers undergo the same rigorous medical checks as pilots to spot any problems that might pose a hazard to the public. Their hours are also carefully structured to ensure maximum alertness – no more than two hours on duty without a break, no more than two successive night shifts, no shifts longer than 10 hours, or gaps between spells of duty of less than 12 hours.

Spokesmen for both the Guild of Air Traffic Controllers and the Civil Aviation Authority said they had never heard of controllers suffering sleep disorders. The spokesman for the CAA said: "We would certainly take it seriously if anyone did have a problem. We have our own medical department which would certainly be able to offer help to someone with a sleeping disorder." He said he failed to see how a controller could fall asleep and not be noticed, because they never worked alone.

The most serious sleep disorder is narcolepsy where the patient is liable to fall asleep unexpectedly at any time. Insomnia caused by stress and depression is a common problem, and sleep apnoea prevents patients breathing normally at night so that they continual wake up and are exhausted the next day.

Professor Douglas said that daytime sleepiness was a huge problem, affecting about one-in-25 middle-aged men and one-in-50 middle-aged women. "There is evidence that one-quarter to one-fifth of all motorway accidents are caused by the driver falling asleep at the wheel ... these accidents have been shown in one study to be the commonest cause of fatalities," he said.

Nurses appoint Saudi lawyer

Ian Burrell

The two nurses facing murder charges in Saudi Arabia have been visited in jail by the British consul and have appointed a Saudi legal expert to represent them at their trial.

Tim Lamb, the consul, spent 15 minutes with each of the women in Damman central prison, after flying 250 miles from Riyadh, the Saudi capital. Lucille McLauchlan, 31, of Dundee, and Deborah Parry, 41, of the Midlands, both said they were in good health and being treated well by prison officials.

The women are accused of the murder on 11 December of Yvonne Gifford, 55, an Australian nurse who worked with them at Dhahran hospital on the eastern coast of Saudi Arabia. Mr Lamb spoke to them individually and was able to take personal messages which have been passed on to their families.

Britain's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Andrew Green, said both women were "naturally anxious" but bearing up quite well "in the circumstances". "They selected a lawyer to represent them. We are now in touch with that lawyer and we are seeking access for him to go and visit the two prisoners," he told BBC Radio 4's *PM* programme yesterday.

Lucille McLauchlan: charged with murdering colleague

The ambassador also said he believed they would get a just hearing. "I think we should be careful not to assume that because the procedures here are completely different, that they are necessarily unjust. I think that would be a mistake to assume that," he said. He added that 30,000 British citizens lived and worked "perfectly happily" in Saudi Arabia, many of them for years. Only "a handful" ever got into trouble, and at present there were just five British citizens being held in jail, including the two nurses.

Officials at the British embassy in Riyadh said the lawyer chosen was highly respected. "He is a local lawyer who is familiar with sharia law and who speaks both English and Arabic. He also has a good working relationship with the authorities," one said.

The two nurses had had no contact with the British authorities since they were spoken to briefly on Christmas Eve by diplomats while they were being held at a police station.

With no date set for their trial, the case has already attracted great media attention and the Foreign Office yesterday expressed "concern" over reports in a Saudi newspaper published in London that the Britons had confessed to the killing. The paper, *Al-Hayat*, alleged that a fingerprint from one of the suspects was found in Ms Gilford's room and that the Australian nurse was battered with a teapot before being stabbed with a kitchen knife. It claimed that almost £2,500 was removed from Ms Gilford's bank account in the three days after her death.

The details have not been carried in Saudi-based Arabic newspapers, and it is not clear whether British authorities will raise concern over prejudice to the trial. A Foreign Office spokesman said: "Whether it is the Saudi press or the UK press, we are always concerned about subjective items or items discussing the case."

He added that assurances of the integrity of the justice system given by the Saudi ambassador in London, Dr Ghazi Algosaibi, last weekend were "helpful". "He was obviously seeking to establish that they will have a fair trial, and certainly suggestions of summary executions are irresponsible. No Westerner in recent times has been executed in Saudi Arabia."

THE NEW YEAR HONOURS

Rewards for Tory supporters are an insult says Labour

POLITICS

The New Year's Honours were attacked as "shabby" last night as it emerged that a number of those ennobled today have connections with the Conservative Party. Labour's campaign spokesman Brian Wilson said this year's list was "stuffed with rewards for Tory funders and favourites."

Of 30 knights on the Prime Minister's list, three have headed companies which gave money to the Tory Party. Three are Conservative MPs and at least three more have supported the Tories in other ways. One, Bob Horton, is chairman of the recently privatised Railtrack.

Also among the new knights is Michael Pickard, chairman of the London Docklands Development Corporation. He was also chief executive of Sears Plc when it made a donation of £15,000 to the Conservative Party. Other Conservative supporters who have been honoured include the new life peer Andrew Lloyd Webber, entertainer Cilla Black, CBE, and rower Stephen Redgrave, OBE.

Last night Mr Wilson said the list read like a "resignation honours" of people whose services to the Conservatives had not previously been recognised. "The inclusion of these shabby political honours are an insult to the many people included in the list who have given genuinely valuable service to the country," he said.

The two other new knights whose former companies gave money to the Conservatives are Graeme Odgers, now chairman of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, and David Rowland, now chairman of Lloyds. Mr Odgers was chief executive of Alfred McAlpine Plc from 1990-93, during which time it gave £20,000 to the party. When Mr Rowland was chairman of the Sedgwick group between 1989 and 1992, it gave a donation of £20,000.

According to a parliamentary answer given to Denis MacShane, Labour MP for Rotherham, 133 Conservative MPs have been knighted since 1979. In the same period the honour has been given to only four Labour MPs. Last night a Conservative Party spokeswoman said Labour had no right to condemn the Government when it had just appointed the architect Sir Richard Rogers, a party supporter, as a life peer. All those named by Labour had been given their honours for other services to public life, she added.

"Labour spend all their time giving honours for favours to the Labour Party, and they plan to do a lot more as part of their proposal to replace hereditary peers by making whole batches of life peers – all those nice cronies of Tony Blair. I don't think they are in a position to start going on about political honours," she said.

FRAN ABRAMS


Raj Kumar Bagri: 'Encouraging' life peerage

Peerage hailed as spur to Asian businessmen

BUSINESS

The chairman of the London Metal Exchange, Raj Kumar Bagri, CBE, received the highest honour of any UK businessman in the New Year Honours, a life peerage, and he hailed it as proof that there were no barriers to Asians in the UK.

"I am proud of my origins. This will be a great encouragement to Asian businessmen and other ethnic communities in the UK," said Mr Bagri.

The LME came in for criticism earlier this year when a multimillion pound copper trading scandal was unearthed at the Japanese trading company Sumitomo. Mr Bagri pointed out yesterday that Sumitomo was not a member of the LME, but despite this he had lead moves to reform and strengthen the LME's operations.

A number of businessmen were knighted, including Robert Horton, chairman of Railtrack, and David Rowland, chairman, Lloyd's of London. Mr Rowland successfully steered the debt-laden London insurance market through a £3.2bn restructuring this year.

Other business knights included Michael Jenkins, OBE, chairman of the City's Futures and Options Association and The London Clearing House, for services to the finance industry. John Laing, CBE, DL, chairman of his own building company, John Laing Plc, received a knighthood "for services to the construction industry."

Peter Davis, chief executive of Prudential insurance company, was awarded his knighthood for services to training and industry.

JOHN WILLCOCK

The Prime Minister's List

LIFE PEERS

Bagri, Raj Kumar, CBE, chm, London Metal Exchange and chm, MetDist Ltd.
Lloyd Webber, Sir Andrew, composer.
Emerton, Dame Audrey Caroline, DBE, DL, ch offr, Care in the Commty and co-chm, med bd, St John Ambulance; chm, Brighton Health Care NHS Trust.

PRIVY COUNCILLORS

Davis, David Michael, MP for Boothferry and Minr of State, FCO.
Forth, Eric, MP for Mid Worcs and Minr of State, Dept for Educ and Employment.
Jack, John Michael, MP for Fylde and Financial sec to Her Majesty's Treas.
Ogilvy, The Hon Sir Angus James Bruce, KCVO, trustee of The Princes' Trust and chm of The Princes' Youth Business Trust Advisory Ccl.
Widdecombe, Ann Noreen, MP for Maidstone and Minr of State, Home Off.

COMPANION OF HONOUR

Rowse, Alfred Leslie. For serv History and Literature.

KNIGHTS BACHELOR

Ayckbourn, Alan, CBE, playwright, serv the theatre.
Baer, Jack Mervyn Frank, serv the art trade.
Baker, Nicholas Brian, MP for Dorset North, for polit serv.
Bedser, Alec Victor, CBE, serv cricket.
Blundell, Thomas Leon, FRS, serv the Biotechnol and Biological Sciences Research Ccl and to scient res.
Budd, Alan Peter, Chief Economic Adviser to Her Majesty's Treas and hd, Govt Econ Serv.
Davis, Peter John, chm, National Advisory Ccl for Educ and Training Targets, serv training and to ind.
Day, Simon James, for polit and publ serv.
Dear Geoffrey James, QPM, DL, Her Majesty's Insp of Constabulary, serv the pol.
Eyre, Richard Charles Hastings, CBE, artistic dir, R National Theatre, serv drama.
Harrison, David, CBE, Master, Selwyn College, Univ of Camb, serv educ and to nuclear safety.
Harvie, John Smith, CBE, for polit and publ serv.
Horton, Robert Baynes, chm, Railtrack plc, serv the rly ind.
Hourston, Gordon Minto, chm, Armed Forces Pay Review Body, serv the armed forces and to ind.
Jenkins, Michael Nicholas Howard, OBE, chm, Futures and Options Association and The London Clearing House, serv the finance ind.
Laing, John Martin Kirby, CBE, DL, chm, John Laing plc, serv the construction ind.
McCartney, James Paul, MBE, musician, serv music.
Meadow, Prof Samuel Roy, serv paediatrics and to the R College of Paediatrics and child hlth.
Odgers, Graeme David William, chm, Monopolies and Mergers Commn, serv ind.
Ouseley, Herman George, chm, Commn for Racial Equality, serv commty rels and loc govt.
Pickard, John Michael, chm, London Docklands Development Corporation, serv urban regeneration.
Richards, Brian Mansel, CBE, exec chm, Peptide Therapeutics Ltd, serv the biotechnol ind.
Rowland, John David, chm, Lloyds of London, serv the ins ind.
Townsend, Cyril David, MP for Bexleyheath, for polit serv.
Treitel, Prof Guenter Heinz, QC, former Vinerian Prof of English Law, Univ of Oxf, serv law.
Walker, The Hon Miles Rawstron, CBE, lly chief minister, Isle of Man Govt, serv the Govt of the Isle of Man.
Watson, Ronald Matthew, CBE, ldr, C group, Assoc of Metropolitan Authorities, serv loc govt.
Wells, William Henry Weston, reg chm, South Thames NHS exec, serv hlth care.
Whitney, Raymond William, OBE, MP for Wycombe, for polit serv.
Zochonis, John Basil, DL, for polit and publ serv.

ORDER OF THE BATH

Knight Grand Cross (GCB)
Battishill, Sir Anthony Michael William, KCB, chm, Bd of In Rev.

Knight Commander (KCB)
Wilson, Richard Thomas James, CB, Permanent under sec, Home Off.

Companion (CB)
Chant, Elizabeth Ann, Ch exec, Child Support Agency, DSS. **Devereau**, George Michael, former Ch exec, CO Information. **Essery**, David James, head of Group 1, Home Dept, Scott Off. **Gibson**, David, for publ serv. **Hawtin**, Brian Richard, former asst under sec (Home and Overseas), MOD. **Hogg**, David Alan, Dep Treas Solicitor, Treas Solicitors Dept. **Janvrin**, Robin Berry, CVO, dep private sec to the Queen. **McQuaid**, James, ch scientist, Health and Safety exec, Dept of Env. **Pryor**, Arthur John, former head, Competition Policy Division, Dept of Trade and Indust. **Robson**, Stephen Arthur, dir, Finance Regulation and ind dirate, Her Majesty's Treas. **Rochester**, Terence Anthony, ch highway engr, the Highways Agency, Dept of Transport. **Smee**, Prof Clive Harrod, ch econ advr and dir of operational res, Dept of Health. **Wilcock**, Christopher Camplin, former head, Nuclear Power Privatisation Team, Dept of Trade and Indust. **Wood**, Philip, OBE, dir, Roads and Local Transport, Dept of Transport. **Woolman**, Joseph Roger, legal advr and solr, Min of Agric, Fisheries and Food.

ORDER OF ST MICHAEL & ST GEORGE

Commander (CMG)
Bowers, Roger George, OBE, asst dir gen, the Br Ccl.

ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Knight Grand Cross (GBE)
Keith Of Kinkel, Henry Shanks, The Right Hon Baron, former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.
Knight Commander (KBE)
Hesketh, The Right Hon Baron Thomas Alexander Fermor, for polit serv.
Dame Commander (DBE)
Dyche, Rachael Mary, CBE, for polit serv.
Hine, Deirdre Joan, Chief Medical Offr, Welsh Office, serv med.
Mills, Barbara Jean Lyon, QC, Dir of Public Prosecutions.
Ogilvie, Bridget Margaret, dir, Wellcome Trust, serv science.
Wong, The Honourable Rosanna, Yick-ming JP, for publ and commty serv, Hong Kong.

Commander (CBE)
Adshead, John Edwin, serv the National Training Awards and to vocational trg. **Alston**, Nicholas Kenneth, asst sec, MoD. **Au-Yeung**, Anthony, Fu OBE JP Commr of Inland Revenue Hong Kong.

Barma, Haider Hatim Tyebjee, ISO, JP Sec for Transport, Hong Kong. **Beaumont**, Michael Hay, OBE, for polit and publ serv. **Bell**, Arthur John Armstrong, for polit and publ serv. **Bellingham**, Alastair John, Prof of Haematology, King's College Hospital School of Medicine and Dentistry, serv med and to the R College of Pathologists. **Bhattacharyya**, Prof Sushantha Kumar, Prof of Manufacturing Systems Engineering, Univ of Warwick, serv ind and to technol. **Brown**, Donald Leslie, Counsellor (Management), New York. **Brown**, John David Stuart, MBE, for polit and publ serv. **Burd**, Christopher John Skidmore, serv forestry ind. **Burke**, David Thomas, expert spec advr on environment, Dept of Env.

Cairns, David Adam, music critic, the Sunday Times, serv music. **Cawthra**, David Wilkinson, former dir, infrastructure serv privatisation, BR Board, serv the rly ind. **Chapman**, Hester Mary Ruth, ptnr, Jones Lang Wootton, serv the property ind. **Clark**, William Herman MacKillop, former hd, operational reorganisation div, Crown Prosecution Service. **Clarke**, Stella Rosemary, DL, serv the commty in Bristol. **Clarke**, Owen JD, Controller, Scotland, Bd of In Rev. **Clay**, The Hon Betty St Clair, serv Guiding. **Clinton**, John Bruce, chm Beden plc, serv ind and to expt. **Curry**, Donald Thomas Younger, chm, Meat and Livestock Commn, serv agric.

Daniel, William Wentworth, for serv for industrial rels. **Dart**, Edward Charles, res and devel dir, Zeneca Seeds, serv ind and to science. **Deakin**, Nicholas Dampier, serv the Commn on the Future of the Voluntary Sector. **Denton**, Anthony Albert, chm, Noble Denton Internat Ltd, serv engring. **Dickens**, Roger Joseph, DL, dep UK sen ptnr, KPMG, serv ind in the West Midlands. **Dowman**, Judith, chair Bradford and Dist Training and Enterprise Ccl, serv trg. **Driver**, Olga Lindholm, sen ptnr, Alsop Driver Partnership, serv Arts and to architectural rels. **Duffy**, Francis Cuthbert, serv architecture.

Enderby, Prof John Edwin, FRS, former HO Wills Prof of Physics, Univ of Bristol, serv physics. **Evans**, Prof Henry John, serv med res. **Fair**, James Stuart, chm, Dundee Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, serv hlth care. **Fang**, Kenneth, Hung OBE JP, serv ind in Hong Kong. **Farquharson**, Jonathan, former legal commr, Charity Commn. **Farrell**, Thomas Hugh Francis, TD, DL, pro-chancellor and chm of ccl, Univ of Hull, serv higher educ. **Filkin**, David Geoffrey Nigel, sec, Assoc of District Ccls, serv loc govt. **Fishman**, Stanley, pres, Cinema Exhibitors Assoc, serv the film ind. **Forsyth**, Frederick, writer, serv literature. **Frye**, Michael John Ernest, Ch exec, B Elliott plc, serv busns.

Goodhart Prof Charles Albert Eric, Prof of Banking and Finance, LSE, serv monetary econs. **Grant**, Peter James, chm, Highlands and Islands Airport Ltd, serv ind. **Gribble**, Paul Frederick, for polit serv.

Harper, Ewan William, serv the Church of Eng. **Harrington**, Derek James, dep chm and Ch exec, Port of Felixstowe Ltd, and dir, Hutchison Internat Port Holdings, serv the ports ind. **Hartington**, Peregrine Andrew Morny Cavendish Marquess of, former sen steward of the Jockey Club and chm, Brit Horse Racing Board, serv horse racing. **Hewitt**, David, serv the commty. **Hibbs**, Pamela Jean, OBE, ch nurse and dir of quality assurance, R Hospitals NHS Trust, London, serv hlth care. **Hill**, Arthur Derek, serv art. **Hughes**, Jenny, OBE, chm, Riverside Mental Health NHS Trust, serv hlth.

Ingham, Michael Peter Frank, OBE, For serv Brit expts to Europe.

Jarrold, Kenneth Wesley, dir of human and corporate resources, NHS exec, Dept of Health. **Jones**, Clive Lawson, dep sec-Gen, European Energy Conference.

Kennedy, George MacDonald, chm, Smiths Industries Medical Systems, serv the hlth care ind and to expt. **Knight**, Cecil Gordon, OBE, hdteach, Small Heath School, Birmingham, serv educ.

Landerer, John, AM, For serv legal educ and UK Aust rels. **Laslett**, Thomas Peter Ruffell, serv the Camb Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. **Lawton**, Robert Noyes, serv agric in Wessex. **Lee**, Simon Timothy, for polit serv. **Lewis**, Martyn John Dudley, chm, Drive for Youth and Youthnet UK, serv young people and to the hospice movement. **Ley**, Francis David Lindley, former chm, Provincial Stipendiary Magistrates Association. **Lumsden**, John, Ch exec, Motherwell Bridge Group, serv engring ind.

Mackey, Thomas George, serv urban regeneration. **Manship**, Colin Barry, former dir, Immigration Service (Enforcement), Home Off. **McLaughlin**, Brenda Mary, serv commty and to hlth care. **McLaughlin**, Elizabeth Mary, hd of civilian mgemt (policy), MoD. **Miller**, James David Frederick, chm, Scottish Qualifications Authority, serv educ. **Morris**, Dominic Charles Bernard, former dep hd, Policy Unit. **Mowatt**, Richard Brian, former Ch Dental Offr, DoH. **Murray**, Prof John Joseph, Prof of Child Dental Hlth, Univ of Newcastle, serv dental hlth.

O'Neal, Joseph Reynold, OBE, for publ and commty serv in Brit Virgin Islands. **Owen**, Raymond Godfrey, OBE, for publ serv in Wales, espcly to pol. **Oxfuird**, George Hubbard Makgill the Viscount of, Bt, for polit serv.

Parker, David John, consult cardiac surg, St Georges Hospital, London, serv med. **Paul**, Roderick Sayers, former chm, Brit Water, serv the water ind and to expt. **Percy**, Prof John Pitkeathly Ian, chm, Accounts Commn for Scotland, serv accounting and to loc authorities. **Perry**, Rupert, pres and Ch exec offr, EMI Europe, serv the recording ind. **Plowden**, Anna Bridget, for conservation serv mns. **Poole**, Christopher Bernard, for polit serv. **Popat**, Andrew, for polit serv. **Potter**, David Edwin, chm and Ch exec, Psion plc, serv the mfg ind. **Price**, Bernard Albert, cnty clrk and Ch exec, Staffs Cnty Ccl, serv loc govt. **Putnam**, Col John Richard George, TD, serv the Territorial Auxiliary and Volunteer Reserve Association in South East Eng.

Ransford, John Anthony, former hon sec, Assocn of Dirs of Social Services, serv social work. **Redgrave**, Steven Geoffrey, MBE, serv rowing. **Rix**, Timothy John, serv publishing. **Reid**, Dermot James, for polit and publ serv. **Robson**, James Donald, DL, ldr, Durham Cnty Ccl, serv loc government. **Rose**, Kenneth Vivian, serv jrnlsm and to literature. **Rothschild**, Edmund Leopold de, TD, for charitable serv. **Rush**, Francis Arthur David, hd of devel and staffing, Customs and Excise.

Seaton, Prof Anthony, Prof of Environmental and Occupational Medicine, Univ of Aberdeen, Lothian and Grampian Hlth Boards, serv med. **Shanks**, Prof Robert Gray Robin, serv med. **Sheldon**, Mark Hebberton, serv the legal profession. **Sherrin**, Edward George, producer and dir, serv drama and to broadcasting. **Skillington**, Colin John Graham, MBE, OL, serv the dairy ind and for publ serv. **Shore**, Sydney Frederick, chm of trustees, Independent Living Funds, serv disabled. **Sinclair**, James William, Scott Off. **Singleton**, Roger, Barnardos, serv young people. **Skitt**, Baden Henry, BEM, OPM, Assistant Commr, Met Pol, serv the pol. **Smith**, Kevin, mgg dir, busnss operations, Brit Aerospace plc, serv the defence ind. **Stringer**, Vera, for polit serv.

Taylor, Harry, mbr, Board of Banking Supervision, serv banking. **Thomas**, Brian Keith, chm, Cardiff Business Club and Mount Stuart Group, serv busnss and to commty in Wales. **Thompson**, David Robin Bibby, TD, former dep chm, Board of the Dev Commn, serv busnss in rural areas. **Thomson**, Rosemary Edith Robertson, OBE, former chm, Magistrates' Association, serv the magistracy. **Tomlinson**, John, opera singer, serv music. **Try**, Hugh William, chm, Constn ind Training Board, serv the constn ind. **Tullett**, Derek, pres, Tullett and Tokyo Forex Internat Ltd, serv the finance ind.

Vaughan, Frank, OBE, OL, serv the NABC-Clubs for Young People.

Weatherhead, The Very Rev James Leslie, former prin clrk, Gen Assembly of the Church of Scotland and chm, Church Leaders Forum, serv ecumenical rels and for publ serv. **Wheatley**, Oswald Stephen, chm, the Sports Ccl for Wales, serv sport. **Williams**, Prof John Gwynn, serv the Natl Library of Wales. **Winter**, Gregory Paul, serv science. **Wood**, Andrew, for publ serv. **Wood**, David Alan, former hd of info technol and project mgr, Lab mkt system project, DfEE. **Wright**, Anne, vice-Chancellor and Ch exec, Univ of Sunderland, serv higher educ.

Officer (OBE)
Ainsworth, Mavis, former dir, School of Cultural Studies, Sheffield Hallam Univ, serv educ. **Aldridge**, Edward, DL, mbr, Moray Ccl, serv loc govt. **Alexander**, Graeme Yorkston, Ch exec offr, Devro Internat plc, serv the food ind. **Allen**, Anthony Paul, cnty trading standards offr, East Sussex Cnty Ccl, serv trading standards and to consumer protection. **Allen**, Ian George, Valuation Principal, Bd of In Rev. **Allen**, Elizabeth Anne, former dir of nursing, North West Anglia Healthcare Trust, serv hlth care. **Allington**, William Claude, for polit and publ serv. **Allsop**, Prof Richard Edward, Prof of Transport Studies, Univ College London, serv traffic mgemt and road safety. **Anderson**, John Victor Ronald, for publ serv. **Archer**, Lt Michael, serv the Advisory Board for Redundant Churches. **Attwood**, Norma Alice Cox, Vice-Presdt, The Senate, Bermuda. **Ault**, John D, chair, Corporation of Yeovil College, serv educ.

Bailey, David, dir of devel, London Underground Ltd, serv publ transport in London. **Bain**, Prof Andrew David, bd mbr, Scottish Enterprise, serv the Scottish economy. **Ball**, Edward John Meldrum, former dir, Oil Companies Internat Marine Forum, serv maritime safety to the environment. **Bamber**, Helen Rae, serv the care of the victims of torture. **Barnes**, Prof Howard Anthony, sen scientist, Unilever Research, serv science and technol. **Bastard**, Alison Mary Hore, serv the magistracy in South Devon. **Bavidge**, Elizabeth Mary, co-chair, Women's National Commn, serv women's issues. **Beeson**, The Very Rev Trevor Randall, serv the Church of Eng partic as Dean of Winchester Cathedral. **Belshaw**, Hugh Richard, former finance dir, OXFAM, for charitable serv. **Biddle** Prof Martin, serv the R Commn on the Historical Monuments of Eng. **Birley** Robin Edgar, DL, dir, Vindolanda Trust, serv conservation. **Black** Miss Cilla, serv entertainment. **Blackburn** David, Sen Management Pay Band 2, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. **Blair** Peter Kenneth, mgg dir, Racal Research Ltd, serv the radar ind. **Blake** Victor Harold, founder chm, the London Underwriting Centre (LUC), serv the ins ind. **Blakey** Charles Conrad, RD, chm, Kent Probation Committee, serv the rehab of offenders. **Blakey** Ian James, dir gen, Brit Iron and Steel Producers Association, serv ind. **Blunt** Mrs Jennifer, serv med res ethics. **Bosy** Christopher Arthur, Ch exec, Symonds Group Ltd, serv the MOD. **Bray** Geoffrey Malcolm, chm, Kazakh and Uzbek Brit Trade and Ind Ccls, serv expt. **Brennan** Patrick, finance dir, Minories Finance Ltd, serv banking. **Broadbent** Mrs Linda, Sen Management Pay Band 2, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. **Brown** Mrs Rosemary Anne, Member, Occupational Pensions Board, serv pensions legislation. **Brunsdon-Lenaerts** Mrs Gilberte-Marie, serv Anglo-Belgian rels. **Bryant** Mrs Barbara Kathleen, Grade 7, DSS. **Burke** Keith Patrick, mgg dir, Dana Spicer Europe Ltd, Dana Corporation, serv ind and to the environment. **Burnett** David, serv the devel and application of biochemistry to hlth care. **Burnison**, William John, for publ serv. **Burton**, David John Franklin, Dir, Br Ccl, Jordan. **Bush**, The Honourable William McKeeva, JP, Minr of commty Development, Sports, Women's and Youth Affairs and Culture, Cayman Islands.


Frederick Forsyth: Best-selling author appointed CBE

Calam, Derek Harold, mbr and vice chm, Brit Pharmacopoeia Commn, serv the contr of meds. **Campbell**, Libby, exec dir nursing and quality, West Lothian NHS Trust, serv hlth care. **Carmichael**, Dennis Duncan, hon treas, Lawn Tennis Association, serv lawn tennis. **Castle**, Enid, former prin, Cheltenham Ladies College, serv educ. **Chadwick**, Jonathan Joseph, sec to the Imperial War Museum. **Chappory**, Alfred, BEM, For serv sport in Gibraltar. **Charlton**, Christopher, dir, Cromford Mill Project, Derbyshire, serv conservation. **Chen**, Da-hwa, for charitable and commty serv in Hong Kong. **Child**, Prof Dennis, serv deaf people. **Childs**, Edward Samuel, exec producer, Carlton UK Television, serv tv Broadcasting. **Clark**, Brian James, prin specist insp, Health and Safety exec, Dept of Env. **Clarke**, Harold, District Insp, Bd of In Rev. **Clarkson Webb**, Michael Robert, serv the commty in Surrey. **Close**, Seamus Anthony, for publ serv. **Coates**, Christine, dir, Coates Engineering (Internat Ltd), serv econ devel in North West Eng. **Collins**, Joan Henrietta, For serv drama. **Collins**, Paulene Mary, serv legal educ. **Cooper**, Charles John, prin professional and technol offr, MoD. **Cooper**, Commodore George Richard, RD, ch of operations, R National Lifeboat Inst, serv the RNLI. **Cooper**, Derek MacDonald, serv radio broadcasting. **Cooper**, Michael John, Principal, Brit School in the Netherlands. **Court**, David Leonard, serv tourism in East Anglia. **Courtauld**, William Montgomerie, for serv Brit comml intrsts in Hong Kong. **Coutanche**, The Hon Jurat John Alexander Gore, former Jurat, R Court of Jersey, serv the commty. **Cowie**, Thomas Eddie, lly dir, Br Ccl Ghana. **Craig**, Sq Ldr Robert Frederick, RAF (Retd), former Grade 7, MoD. **Crombie**, Anthony Campbell, Dep hd of Mission, Belgrade. **Currie**, Adrian Robert, OFSM, Chief Fire Offr, Devon Fire and Rescue Service, serv the fire serv.

Darby, Prof John, serv commty rels. **Davies**, William Roch, former dir, Welsh Centre for Internat Affairs, for humanitarian serv. **Dealey**, Peter, serv the rehab of offenders. **Dies**, Brian Charles, serv Brit Waterways. **Dick**, James, dir of social work serv, the Highland Ccl, serv social work. **Dodsworth**, Elizabeth Ann, for polit serv. **Duddy**, Margaret, for polit and publ serv. **Duff**, Andrew Nicholas, for polit serv. **Duggan**, Sister Mary Vincent, serv educ. **Dunsmore**, Helen Simpson, serv higher educ. **Durden-Smith**, Neil, for charitable serv.

Edwards, Albert John, MBE, AFM, serv 31 Squadron R Air Force Association. **Edwards**, Henry Ashley, consult anaesthetist, Ysbyty Gwynedd, serv the Welsh Medical Committee. **Eldrid**, The Rev John Gisborne Charteris, serv the Samaritans. **Elliott**, Geoffrey Kenyon, serv forestry and to wood science. **Elliott**, Robert William, chair and dir, Wiltshire and Swindon Users Network and chair, the Jumbulance Group, serv disabled in Wiltshire. **Ellis**, David John, Grade 6, MoD. **Erving**, Andrew James, Grade 7, FCO. **Etchells**, George Stanley, mbr, Rotherham Metropolitan Ccl, serv loc govt. **Ericsson**, Eric Magnus, former gen mgr, power system devel, National Grid Company plc, serv the electricity ind. **Evans**, David Roger, serv agric in Wales. **Evans**, David Roger, serv agric in Wales. **Evans**, Gwynne Howard Neill, former Grade 6, DfEE.

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Member (MBE)
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Baerlein, Peggy, serv the Lister Hospital Hertfordshire. **Bailey**, Beryl, Support Grade Band 1, Home Off. **Bailey**, Peter Edwin, former sen doorkeeper, House of Lords. **Baker**, Albert John, serv war pensions cttees in London. **Baker**, Christopher Rodney, Hon Consul, Dunkirk. **Baker**, Elsie Evelyn, serv the Girls Brigade on Guernsey. **Ball**, Kenneth Walter, former hon sec, Brit Transport Pensioners Federation, serv the rly ind. **Barlow**, Jack Boamer, serv loc rels in the former South Glamorgan and to the commty in Sully. **Barnes**, Sigrid Geraldine Wells, for charitable serv in the Falkland Islands. **Barr**, Andrew Brown, serv the R Agricultural Benevolent Inst and to the Essex Agricultural Society. **Bartholomew**, Dennis Gordon, serv the commty in Whiston South Yorkshire. **Bateman**, Haydn Sydney, Auxiliary Coastguard-in-charge, Her Majesty's Coastguard, St Govans, Dyfed, serv Safety at Sea. **Baum**, Derek, serv the Association of Jewish ex-Servicemen and Women. **Beaton**, Donald James MacDonald, Shepherd, Roslin Inst, serv scient res. **Beasley**, Mary Loveday, serv the commty in Wormley Hertfordshire. **Beckett**, Marion, asst caretaker, Priestley College, Warrington, Cheshire, serv educ. **Bell**, Howard Philip, hon liaison offr (eastern reg), R National Lifeboat Inst, serv the RNLI. **Bennett**, Clarice Mary, serv the Brit Red Cross Society in Norfolk. **Berry**, Thelma, serv the Norfolk Foster Care Association. **Bershers**, Janet, Brit Vice-Consul, Chicago. **Bevan**, David Wyn, serv industrial rels in Wales. **Bevan**, Mary Winifred, serv the NSPCC in Merthyr Tydfil. **Bevis**, Deirdre, Administrative Offr, MoD. **Billingsley**, Fred, Higher Professional and Technology Offr, MoD. **Billington**, Anthea, sec to the mgg dir, Britannia Airways Ltd, serv the aviation ind. **Bingham**, Margaret Elizabeth, serv tourism.

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Derham, Royland Charles, gen sec, the T S Vindicatrix Association, serv the Merchant Navy. **Dewey**, Joyce Muriel, serv the commty in Lymington Hampshire. **Dobson**, Frederick Gaunt, serv the Ex-Service Fellowship Centres. **Dodd**, Ingrid Julia, for polit serv. **Doherty**, John, serv disabled ex-servicemen and women. **Dougherty**, Maurice Francis, asst contrller, the Stamp Office, Bd of In Rev. **Donaldson**, Hilda, serv educ. **Donaldson**, Margaret Agnes, serv the WRVS in Llanelli Dyfed. **Dorman**, Teresa, for serv the Glazert Activity Group Lennox Castle Hospital, Glasgow. **Duckmanton**, Marma, Management Pay Band 4, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. **Duncan**, James, serv the Scout Association in Scotland. **Durno**, Denis, OL, GP, Portlethen, Aberdeenshire, serv med. **Dyer**, Eric Anthony, welf offr, National Grid Company plc, serv personnel mgemt. **Dyke**, Elizabeth Stella, serv the commty in Sherborne, Dorset.

Earl, Pamela Elaine, higher exec offr, Crown Prosecution Service. **Easter**, Mary Jean, clerical asst, Wiltshire Constabulary, serv the pol. **Edginton**, Daphne Viola, serv the commty in Milton-under-Wychwood Oxon. **Edwards**, Geoffrey Stephen, mgg dir, Oxley Developments Company Ltd, serv ind. **Edwards**, Harry Allen, serv the Anglers' Conservation Association. **Edwards**, Michael, admin offr, Dept for Educ and Employment. **Edwards**, Pauline, Divisional Commandant, Special Constabulary, Dorset Police, serv the pol. **Egan**, Brendan William Laurence, for serv the Brit School Manila. **Eglington**, Margaret M, former conductor, Billingham String Orchestra and Billingham Friday Choir, Cleveland Peripatetic Music Service, serv music educ. **Elliot**, James Murray, former chm, Scout Association, East Sussex, serv Scouting. **Ellis** Brian Henry, founder, Vision Aid Overseas, for charitable serv. **Ellis**, Pauline Ann, serv the commty in Derby. **Elsworth**, Margaret, for serv educ and hlth South Africa. **Emerson**, Harry, serv the commty in Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland. **Eustice**, John Barrymore, for serv the disabled Botswana. **Evans**, Elizabeth Margaret, serv the commty partic disabled people, in Llanelli, Dyfed. **Evans-Gordon**, Ian Kenmure, for polit serv. **Everett**, Shirley, newsvendor, serv the commty in Westminster, London. **Eves**, Doris Mabel, serv the Citizens Advice Bureau in Farnborough, Hants. **Exley**, George Fitton, hon sec, Scarborough Lifeboat Station, serv the RNLI.

Farmer, Ellen Bramley, pres, Old Paisley Society, serv conservation. **Farmer**, Margaret Winifred, serv the R Brit Legion in Sevenoaks Kent. **Faux**, Eric Arnold, serv disabled people in Birmingham. **Fea**, Valerie Ann, former exec sec, the School Library Association, serv librarianship and to young people. **Findlay**, Heather Duncan, loc Offr 2, the Benefits Agency, DSS. **Fleeson**, Nina Mary, former typist, DSS. **Finlay**, Millar Henry, Divisional Offr, (Special Constabulary), Flintshire Division, North Wales Police, serv the pol. **Finlay**, Isabel H, former chiropodist, Glasgow, serv hlth care. **Finlay**, Olwen, serv physiotherapy. **Fisher**, Evelyn May, serv netball in Coventry. **Fisher**, Myra Caroline, serv the commty in Paulsgrove Portsmouth, Hants. **Fitzsimmons**, Bernard Joseph, for publ serv. **Flegg**, Michael Robert, catering mgr, Nottingham City Hospital, serv hlth care. **Fleming**, The Reverend Father Anthony, for charitable and welf serv the commty in Orissa, India. **Fletcher**, Iris Mary, serv the commty in Crowborough, East Sussex. **Flynn**, Dorothy Christine, serv young people in Winchester Hampshire. **Foley**, Thomas William, warder superv, National Gallery. **Folland**, Patricia, serv young people in South Shields, Tyne and Wear. **Force**, Pauline Anne, sch sec, Oakfield Cnty Primary Junior School, Dartford, Kent, serv educ. **Ford**, James Paton Hunter, team ldr/instructor, steelwork, Yarrow Shipbuilders Ltd, serv the shipbldg ind. **Ford**, Robert Peter, sorter, Parcelforce, East Midlands, serv the Post Office and to industrial rels. **Forrester**, Audley Moraise, interchange mgr, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport exec, serv publ transport. **Fortnum**, John Robert, group purchase mgr, Aerospace Group, Rolls-Royce plc, serv the aerospace ind. **Foster** Alfred, founder, African Leprosy Aid, for charitable serv. **Fowley**, John Christopher, water supply mgr, Southern Water, serv the water ind. **Frackelton**, Annie Grace Campbell, serv family care in Edinburgh.

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THE NEW YEAR HONOURS

Celebrities with mass appeal top the list

ARTS

Joan Collins, Cilla Black and Frederick Forsyth are recognised in a New Year Honours which will be remembered for being distinctly more *Dynasty* than Dostoevsky.

Ms Collins, the 63-year-old star who reinveoted her career with the character Alexis in *Dynasty* is a film producer and oovelist and recently won a court case against publisher Random House. She joins a line-up of entertainment supremos known more for their mass appeal than intellectual challenge.

The "people's list" also honours Cilla Black, the presenter of the dating show *Blind Date* with an OBE and Lucy Gannon, the writer behind *Bramwell* and *Soldier, Soldier*, with a MBE.

Other eotertainment celebrities selected for the spotlight are Frederick Forsyth, now appointed a CBE, who wrote *The Day Of The Jackal* and other best-sellers, and Roger McGough, the Liverpudlian pop poet, who is appointed an OBE.

The playwright Alan Ayckbourn becomes a knight, while Andrew Lloyd Webber, who co-wrote the hit shows *Cats*, *Phantom of the Opera* and *Evita*, becomes a life peer.

The broadcaster Terry Wogan has been appointed an honorary OBE while Derek Cooper, the long-time presenter of Radio 4's *Food Programme*, is appointed an OBE.

Paul McCartney has been knighted, while the landscape artist Arthur Derek Hill and writer and broadcaster Ned Sherrin are appointed CBEs. Singer Frankie Vaughan is appointed a CBE for his fund-raising efforts on behalf of the National Association of Boys' Clubs.

Paul McCartney: Knighthood

At the more upmarket eod of showbiz, Britain's leading Wagner bass, John Tomlinson, is appointed a CBE, while Richard Eyre, the artistic director of the National Theatre, has beeo knighted.

Cilla Black said from her Spanish villa that she was thrilled bot "dreading having to wear a new hat".

MARIANNE MACDONALD

Accolade for Major's boyhood cricket hero

SPORT

Steven Redgrave and Damon Hill are the predictable sporting recipients of New Year hooours, but the greatest accolade goes to a cricketer whose playing career ended more than 36 years ago.

Alec Bedser, now 78, receives a knighthood for his services to the game as a player and administrator. A medium-fast bowler who took 236 wickets for England in 51 post-war Test matches, Bedser went on to manage three England tours and was chairman of selectors for a record 13 years until 1981.

As a player with Surrey and England, Bedser was one of the Prime Minister's boyhood heroes. His ideotical twin brother, Eric, was an all-rounder who played at county level, while Alec, who was appointed an OBE in 1964 and a CBE in 1982, is coosidered one of England's all-time great bowlers. He dismissed the great Don Bradman in five successive Test innings and was the only bowler who dismissed him twice for no score.

Another cricket administrator, Ossie Wheatley, a former chairman of the Test and County Cricket Board's cricket committee, is appointed a CBE. Wheatley is chairman of the Sports Council for Wales. A football administrator is also honoured. Glen Kirton is appointed an OBE for his work as tournameot director of Euro 96.

Redgrave is appointed a CBE following his performance this summer in Atlanta, where he became Britain's greatest Olympian by winning his fourth successive rowing gold medal.

Hill, who this year became the first son to emulate his father's achievement in winning the Formula One world drivers' championship, is honoured with the OBE. Two footballers are appointed the MBE: the Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman, and Paul McStay, Celtic's captain and the winner of 73 caps for Scotland. Martin Offiah, rugby league's leading try scorer for a record six seasons and the scorer of 26 tries in 33 Tests for Great Britain, is appointed an MBE.

Bedser: Knighthood for services to cricket

PAUL NEWMAN

Freeman, Michael William Thomas, Insp, Lincolnshire Constabulary, serv the commty. Freeman, Lesley Margaret, Range O, Her Majestys Treas. Freeth, Denzil Kingson, serv the Church of Eng in London. Froomberg, Patricia, serv disabled people. Fryer, Norah, serv elderly people in Church Lawton, Cheshire. Fuller, Michael, laboratory serv mgr, Laboratory of Molecular Biology, serv biology. Gale, Edward Frank, for polit serv. Gallagher, Richard, serv the commty in Aberdeen. Gamble Frank Charles, Dir, Brit Red Cross Society, Bermuda. Gannon, Lucy, writer, serv tv drama. Gardner, Richard Ian, serv the pol. Garratt, Christopher, for serv the Brit commty in Brussels. Geddes, Arthur Buchan, sector offr, the Coastguard Agency, Dept of Transport. George, Arthur Samuel, sch Crossing patrol, Portsmouth, Hants, serv road safety. George James Alexander, Administrative Offr, MOD. Gibb Graham James, ldr, Grampian Police and Braemar Mountain Rescue Teams, serv mountain rescue. Gibson Martin Fraser, for serv the Brit commty in Uruguay. Gibson, Alison Gray, temp project mgr, R Mail, Edinburgh, serv the Post Office. Gibson, Valerie, serv the Right to Peace and Quiet Campaign. Gibson, Sydney, sec, Fergusons Lane Tenants' Association, serv the commty in Scotswood, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Giddings, Joan, former office administrator, Brit Apparel and Textile Confedn, serv the clothing ind. Gilham, George Oliver, First sec (Works), Brit High Commn, New Delhi. Glasgow, Elizabeth, serv the commty in Wester Hailes Edinburgh.

Glover John, serv golf. Gobbett, Maureen Audrey, higher exec offr, MoD. Goddard, Maj Douglas George, serv the commty in Wargrave-on-Thames, Berks. Gol, Joan Doreen, for charitable and welf serv in Texas, US. Goodall, David William, serv nature conservation in Hampshire. Goodstadt, Rose Yin-chee, JP, for serv publ hlth and welf, Hong Kong. Goulding, Stephen, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. Greaves, Anne, serv the Health and Safety Commns Occupational Health Advisory Committee. Greechan, Evelyn, sen traffic warden, City of Glasgow Police, serv road safety. Greenlaw, Ian, Support Grade Band 1, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise. Gregory, Brian, facilities mgr, Sussex Police, serv the pol. Grove, Sylvia Gladys, Office Support Grade Band 2, Home Off. Grum, Alan Joseph, trg mgr, Lucas Aerospace, Wolverhampton Training Centre, Lucas Varity plc, serv trg. Gurney, Leslie, serv the commty in Stockport Cheshire.

Haggarty, Jessie, serv Highland dancing. Hague, Jonathan Ian, Detective Insp, Met Pol, serv the pol. Hall, Alfred, serv the World Ploughing Organisation. Hall, Arthur Charles, serv the commty in Walton-on-Thames Surrey. Hall, Eileen, Admin Offr, DSS. Hallett, Edna Hilda Knight, governor, Newcastle-under-Lyme School, Staffs, serv educ. Hancock, Brenda Margaret, former pers sec, Health and Safety exec, Dept of Env. Hanley, Angela Katherine, trg mgr, First Aid Centre, London Transport, serv publ transport. Harding, Hilda, serv MIND and to the elderly and disadvantaged in Sutton, Surrey. Harman, Anthony Shannon, serv agric and to the Brit Charolais Cattle Society. Harper, Susan Gladys, practice nurse (sister), Roslin Medical Centre, Midlothian, serv hlth care. Harris, David, serv the Post Office and to the commty in Scunthorpe Lincolnshire. Harrison, Marion Constance, serv the Schizophrenia Fellowship on Jersey. Hart, Maureen, pers sec, Vickers Defence Systems Ltd, serv the defence ind. Hart, Patricia Mary, serv the commty on Alderney. Hartley, William Mark, serv the commty in Coventry. Hawes, Dorothy Elizabeth, vocal dept consult, Trinity College of Music, London, serv music educ. Hawkshaw, Judith Anne, serv hous and the commty in Suffolk. Hawley, Shirley Caroline Amelia, former nursing asst, Pease Hill Residential Unit, Nottingham Healthcare Trust, serv hlth care. Hawthorne, Dinnie Margaret, serv the commty partic elderly people in Bourne End, Buckinghamshire.

Hay Gordon Charles, gas engr, for humanitarian serv the former Yugoslavia. Haytes, Arthur Rowland, for charitable serv in Waterlooville Hampshire. Heard, Desmond, gas engr, for humanitarian serv the former Yugoslavia. Heath, Albert Maurice, serv the Nevill Hall Hospital League of Friends Abergavenny, Gwent. Heath, Leslie, publican, serv the commty in East London. Heath, Alison Helen Constance, curator, the Brit Library, serv librarianship and to deaf people. Heath, Barbara Celia, serv the commty in Ringmer East Sussex. Hedges, Patricia Ann, educ advisor, Parcelforce, serv the freight ind. Heeley, Joy Stevenson, former revenue offr, Bd of In Rev. Heler, Thomas William, mbr, Staffordshire Parish Cels Association, serv loc government. Henderson, Mabel Evelyn Jeanette, for serv the Guide Association in Shetland. Hetherington, Joan Elizabeth, for publ serv. Hext, Maj John Wilfred Barratt, TD, voluntary observer, Meteorological Office, Cumbria. Hibbert, Sheila Jean, serv young people in London. Higgins, Herbert Vincent, serv the retd and sen volunteer programme. Highams, Louise Elizabeth, Head, Br Ccl Office, Barcelona.

Hoare, Marjorie Helen, For serv literature and the Is heritage Gibraltar. Hodder, Eileen Jeanne, serv the commty in Richmond upon Thames, Surrey. Hodgkinson, Eileen, for polit and publ serv. Hodgson, Marjorie, serv the commty in York. Hogg, Mavis Ruth, serv lawn tennis. Holden, Olive, serv the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund in Perthshire. Holland, David George, sen road safety offr, Durham Cnty Ccl, serv road safety. Hollis, John Kenneth, for charitable serv in Kent. Holmes, Thomas, former asst dir, environmental services, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Ccl, serv the environment. Honey, Albert Joseph Thomas, serv animal welf in Oxfshire. Hopkins, James William, former mgr, district office, East Midlands Electricity plc, serv the electricity ind. Hopper, Robert, road worker, highways div, Northumberland Contract, serv highways maintenance. Hopton, Olive Mary, serv the commty in Irlam, Manchester. Hornsby, Beve, serv people with dyslexia. Hosie, Anne Jamieson, exec offr, the Benefits Agency, DSS. Howe, Ralph John, gardener, Kettering Gen Hospital, Northants, serv hlth care. Howell, Arthur William, leading firefighter, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority, serv the fire serv. Howes, Edna Emily, serv the R Brit Legion in Northants. Huggons, Denis Arthur, serv the London Gardens Society. Hughes, Margaret Florence, postwoman, R Mail, serv the Post Office and to the commty in Wollaston, Northamptonshire. Hughes, Mildred Emily, ch clrk, Llangefni Cnty Court, Lord Chancellor's Dept. Hui, Ann, On-wah, for serv the performing arts Hong Kong. Hume, David Bain, dir, Philomusica, serv music in Edinburgh. Hunt, Dorothy, serv the Sea Cadet Corps in Nottingham. Hunt, Sarah Ruth, serv disabled children in Northampton. Hunter, Marion, serv the fire serv. Huntington, John Malcolm, serv sports jrnlsm in Yorkshire. Hutcheon, Margaret Isobel, hdteach, Mosstowie Primary School, Morayshire, serv educ. Hutchinson, Helen Rosalind, tourist guide, serv tourism. Hynds, Derek Cecil George, sen professional and technol offr, MoD. Hywel-Jones, Lt Col Robert Ian, MC, sen exec offr, FCO.

Jackson, Norman Peter, Field dir, Save The Children Fund, Khartoum. Jackson, Simon Louis, serv judo for disabled people. Jacobs, Sydney Frederic, serv the commty in Liverpool. Jagdev, Arjan Singh, serv the ethnic commty in Merton London. James, Mary, serv farming and to consumer affrs. Jelkins, John Malcolm, for polit serv. Jerrard, Charles, serv the Brit Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association in Romford, Essex. Johnson, Andy Derrick, sect ldr, mathematics and technol dept, Southwark College London, serv educ. Johnston, George Raby, vice chm, Eildon Housing Association, serv hous. Johnston, Samuel Hans, process and gen supervy Grade D, MoD. Jones, David Charles Newhams, former journalist, *Ashton Reporter*, serv jrnlsm in Lancashire. Jones, David Lloyd, former Ch exec, Arfon Borough Ccl, serv loc govt. Jones, Howard Leslie, maintenance technician, Stanlow Manufacturing Complex, Shell UK Ltd, serv hlth and safety. Jones, Carol Theresa, former sen pers sec, the Highways Agency, Dept of Transport. Jones, Ivy, serv the commty in Tayside. Jones, Janice, serv the commty partic young children, in Adamsdown, Cardiff. Jones, Vera Daisy, for polit and publ serv. Jones, Robert Meirion, serv choral music in the District of Ffestiniog Gwynedd. Jones, Trevor Mostyn, for serv the Environment in North East Eng.

Keene, Wendy, for polit serv. Kelly, Eileen Grace, for serv the commty in Pulborough, West Sussex. Kennedy, Donald Fraser, Hon chm, Dalneigh Sen Citizens Club, serv elderly people in Inverness. Kernohan, Neil Alexander, lly Vice-Consul, Brit Interests Section, *Italian Embassy, Tripoli.* Keys, Richard Leighton, for serv the commty in Banbury, Oxfshire. Kightley, Malcolm John, for serv the Holy Sepulchre Church, Northampton. King, Lorna Jean, for serv Jersey Hospice Care. Kinnaird, Alison, Clarsach Player and Teacher and Glass Engraver, serv Music and to Art. Kirillova, Irina, for serv Anglo/Russian Relations. Kirk, Capt Alex, lly Hon sec, Hartlepool Lifeboat Station, RNLI, serv the RNLI. Kirk, Donald Henry, for serv the R London Aid Society. Kirk, Bernadette Ann, Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust, serv Health Care. Knight, Wendy Patricia, for serv the Brit Red Cross Society in Hampshire. Knowles, Alan Keith, for serv Remploy in Norwich Norfolk. Knowles, Mildred Eveline, for serv Disabled People in Berkshire. Kwan, James, Kin-cheung, for publ serv Hong Kong.

Langridge, Thomas Percival, Founder, the Pahar Trust, for charitable serv. Large, David Stuart, Constable, Cheshire Constabulary, serv the Police and to the commty in Winsford. Lawrance, Margaret Elsie Ann, for serv the commty in Loughton, Essex. Lawrence, Iain William, mgg dir, Thomas Smith and Company (Peterhd) Ltd, serv the Textile ind. Lawrence, R Mary, caretaker, Irfon Valley Cnty Primary School, Powys, serv Educ and to the commty. Lawson, Bernard Robert, Lord Mayor's sec, Manchester City Ccl, serv local govt. Lawthom, Ann, lly hdteach, Rhondda Special School, Trealaw, Rhondda, serv Educ. Leake, Elizabeth May, for charitable serv in Clenchwarton, Norfolk. Leckie, William Gordon John, mgg dir, Crieff Hydro Hotel, Perthshire, serv the Hotel ind and to Tourism. Lee, Bryan Neville, for serv the Samaritans and to the commty in Doncaster. Lee, Lai-shun, for serv sport, Hong Kong. Lees, Winifred Elizabeth, for polit and publ serv. Leete, Jacqueline Margaret, for serv the commty in Hedley Hants. Lefever, Donald Clement, for serv the Butler Trust. Leung, Shou-chun, Principal Govt Land Surveyor, Hong Kong. Leung, Andrew, Kwan-yuen, for serv the textile ind Hong Kong. Leung, Shiu-Wing, exec Offr, MoD. Lewis, Joan, for serv the Historical Association. Lewis, Ann, Teacher in Charge, Widden Family Centre, Gloucester, serv Pre-School Educ. Lewis, Peter Reginald, Sub-Offr (Retained), North Wales Fire Service, serv the Fire Service. Li, Shai-hung, for publ serv, Hong Kong. Li, Simon, Pak-ho, JP, sen asst dir of Housing, Hong Kong. Liao, Sarah Mary, Sau-tung, JP, for serv consumer and environmental affrs, Hong Kong.

Lihou, Maurice George, for serv Young Handicapped People on Guernsey. Linnett, Sandra Elizabeth, lly Sales and Computer Clerk, Kopex Internat Ltd, serv ind. Lloyd, Rose Helena, for serv St Davids Church Hundleton. Lo, Tin-hoi, Management asst, Brit Trade Commn, Hong Kong. Loach, Adrian Neville Barrett, Assistant Group Scout Leader, Bristol, serv Scouting. Lockhead, Rebecca McCausland, for publ serv. Lockwood, Jean Elizabeth, for serv the commty in Amersham, Bucks. Lodge, The Reverend Roy Frederick, Chaplain, Her Majesty's Prison Brockhill. Logan, Dora Amy, for serv the Brit commty Argentina. Longworth, Jaquelyn Patricia, Operational Safety and Policy mgr, Nuclear Electric Ltd, serv Engineering Management. Love, Walter Herbert, for serv Radio Journalism. Lowe, Maurice Ernest, Engineering mgr, Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Ltd, serv the Defence ind. Lowe, William, for serv the Library Service. Lucas, June Valerie, for serv the commty in Stanford Rivers, Essex. Lynn, Brenda Germaine, Sub Divisional Offr, Special Constabulary, West Yorkshire Police, serv the Police. Lynskey, Monica, lly Administrative Offr, Office for Standards in Educ.

MacCallum, Fiona, Attache, HM Embassy, Riga. MacDonald, James Archibald, Head Greenkeeper, R Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, serv Golf. MacDougall, Thomas, Retained Sub-Offr, Tayside Fire Brigade, serv the Fire Service. MacGregor, Williamina, School Cook, Lochardil Primary School, Inverness, serv Educ. MacKay, John Kenneth, Crofter, serv the commty in Sutherlandshire. MacKenzie, Florence King, Dir, Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust, serv the Restoration of Church Buildings. MacLean, George, lly mgr, Air Traffic Service, Sumburgh Airport (Shetland), Civil Aviation Authority, serv Aviation. MacInnes, Jean, for serv the Citizens Advice Bureau in Aberdeen. MacIntyre, Laurence, Chief Superintendent, Strathclyde Police, serv the Police. Mackay, John Watson, Head of Recreation and Access Branch, Research and Advisory Services, Scottish Natural Heritage, serv Countryside Recreation. Macmillan, Maureen S, chm, City of Edinburgh Children's Panel Advisory Committee, serv young people. Macpherson, Elsie, for serv mentally ill people. Macredie, Stuart, lly hdteach, St Albans Junior and Infant School, Wickersley, Rotherham, serv Educ. Magee, The Reverend Robert James, for serv commty Relations.

Males, Alan Roderick, for serv Architecture. Mansfield, Patricia Anne, for serv the commty in Leicester. Marcroft, Constance May, for serv deaf people in Sheffield. Mardell, Leslie George, Administrative Offr, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority, serv the Fire Service. Marriott, Allison Mary, lly Third sec, UK Delegation to the Western European Union, Brussels. Marsden, Samuel Steele, for serv Agriculture. Marshall, Derek, Ch exec, South Humber Business Advice Centre Ltd, serv Business. Martin, Keith John, for polit and publ serv. Massey, Rosemary Elizabeth, office mgr, Lord Chancellor's Dept. Massey, Stanley Thomas, for serv the commty in Havant, Hants. Masters, Carole Kathleen, Higher exec Offr, DSS. Matthews, Tanya Borisovna, for serv broadcasting and jrnlsm, Tunisia. Maxwell, Florenz Elaine Webbe, for serv the Girl Guides and educ in Bermuda. McAlpine, William James, for serv Scouting. McCallion, Joan, typist, MoD. McClean, Rachel, for serv Training. McComb, Isa, For serv Housing. McCrindle, William Rae, chm, McCrindle Group, serv the Engineering ind. McCubbin, David, Compliance mgr, Bd of In Rev. McElroy, Norman Charles John, for serv the Police. McGowan, William, farmer, serv the Cattle ind in Fife. McKain, Donald, Staff Side Co-ordinator, Grampian Healthcare NHS Trust, serv Health Care. McKay, Neil, Revenue exec, Bd of In Rev. McKay, Stuart William, for serv the de Havilland Moth Club. McKinley, Evelyn Hildegard, Administrative Offr, MoD. McLean, Norman, Dir, National Mentoring Consortium, serv the Ethnic commty. McLean, Richard Dick, Prison Offr, Her Majesty's Prison, Edinburgh. McNeilage, Carol Ross, Nursing Auxiliary, Vale of Leven Hospital, Alexandria, serv Health Care and to the commty. McNeill, Valerie Matilda, for serv the Ports ind. McStay, Paul, for serv Association Football. McWhirter, Joseph Henry, for serv the commty and to the Post Office.

Medley, Ivy Florence, for serv the commty in St Lawrence, Essex. Medlin, Alexandra Lynn, Pers asst to Brit High Commr, Cape Town. Mee, Jeremiah Joseph, for serv the Sick Dentist Scheme. Meeker, David Kleinman, for serv the National Film and Television Archive. Meyer, Bridget Anne, Higher exec Offr, Commwlth War Graves Commn. Meyer, Rolf, for serv the commty in Brixham Devon. Milburn, Donald John, For serv the Police and to the commty. Miller, Evelyn May, Administrative Offr, MoD. Miller, Sheila Denise, for serv the Brit Tourist Authority. Miller, Nicholas Charles, for serv People with Alcohol Problems. Mills, Sq Ldr Raymond, for serv the commty in Cambs. Milton, Mae, Administrative Offr, Home Off. Montgomery, Ena, for serv the commty in Chorley, Lancashire. Montgomery, Robert Joseph, for serv the Meat ind. Morgan, Ronald, Dep Governor and hd of Custody, Her Majesty's Prison Norranside. Morley, Richard William, lly Catering mgr, Ring and Brymer (City), serv the Catering ind. Morris, Kathrine Amanda, Clerk to the Corporation, East Birmingham College, serv Educ. Morrison, Donald Fergusson, District Registrar, Strachur, Argyll, serv the commty. Morrow, Marie, for serv disabled people. Mummery, Walter Kenneth John, lly Principal Prison Offr, Her Majesty's Prison and Young Offenders Inst Moorland. Munro, Joan F, Speech and Language Therapy mgr, Highland Communities NHS Trust, serv Health Care. Murray, Ian Adie, for serv educ in Murree, Pakistan. Murray, Robert Nathaniel, for serv the commty in Derby. Musgrave, The Reverend Canon James Robert, for serv the commty.

Newparth, Samuel, for serv music and for charitable serv in Dorset. Ng, Shai-Lai, JP, serv welf, Hong Kong. Nicholls, Jeanne Marjorie, Presdt, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Leagues of Hospital and commty friends, serv Health Care. Nichols, David Edgar Thomas, Sen Scientific Offr, the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency, MoD. Nimmons, Mary, for serv Health Care. Norburn, The Reverend Canon Richard Henry, for serv the commty in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Norgrove, Doreen, for serv the commty in Farnham, Surrey. Norman, Sheila, chm, R Life Saving Society, Suffolk Branch and Commwlth Development Liaison Offr, R Life Saving Society UK, serv Life Saving. Norris, Geoffrey Francis, GP, London, serv Medicine. Nutter, Arthur Joseph, for serv the Lieutenancy in Lancs.

David Seaman: CBE for England's penalty-saving goalkeeper in Euro 96 Photograph: Kevin Lamarque/Reuters

O'Neil John, lly Principal Lecturer and Course Leader of PGCE Art and Design, Univ of Wales Inst, Cardiff, serv Art Educ and Teacher Training. Offiah, Martin, for serv Rugby Football. Oliver, Enid Rosalind, For serv the commty in Ashford, Kent. Orford, William James, for serv Cricket in the West Midlands. Overs, Vera, for serv the commty in Martindale, Cumbria. Owen, Clifford, for serv the Chorley and District Talking Newspaper Lancashire. Owen, Pamela Mary, for serv the commty partic the NHS in Welshpool, Powys.

Palmer, Anthony Gerald, for serv the War Pensions Committee in East Anglia. Palmer, Sarah Faith The Honourable, for serv the commty, partic the Brit Red Cross Society, in Berkshire. Park, Isobel Marilyn, for serv the Scout Association in Dumfries. Passmore, Gordon Seymour, Member, London Borough of Wandsworth, serv local govt. Pattenden, Norman Henry, Special Operations mgr, North and South Railways Ltd, serv the Railways ind. Pattison, William Evans, for serv Mountain Rescue. Patton, Robert John, for serv the Engineering ind. Pendlebury, Christine Anne, Pers sec, Home Off. Perks, Philippa Helen, for serv the commty in Wrington, Bristol. Phillips, Frank Joseph, for serv the St John Ambulance Brigade in Wiltshire. Phillips, Eleanor Elizabeth, Pers sec to the Archbishop of Canterbury, serv the Church of Eng. Phillips, Kathleen Patricia Anne, Management Pay Band 1, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. Phillips, Lilian Jane Helen, DL, for serv the commty in Worthing and West Sussex. Pickering, Jessica Winifred, for serv Foster Care in Lincs. Piercy, Anne Doreen, District Nurse, Tring, Herts, serv Health Care. Pirrit, John Neilson, Sen Planning Offr, Inverclyde Ccl, serv Local Govt. Plenderleith, Margaret Charlotte, Sec, Committee of the Benevolent Fund for Nurses in Scotland, serv the Brit Red Cross Society. Plummer, John, lly Sen Messenger, Lord Chancellor's Dept.

Polley, Shirley Dorothy, School Crossing Patrol Offr, Surrey Cnty Ccl, serv Road Safety. Potter, Muir John, for serv Disabled People in West Sussex and for humanitarian serv in Romania. Pountney, Ruby Margaret, for serv the Citizens Advice Bureau in Solihull, West Midlands. Powell, Jean Powell, Pre-Production Engineer. Prentis, Derek Edward Dowling, for serv the R Brit Legion in London. Price, Mo, for serv the commty in Stafford. Pryor, Edward George, JP, Principal Govt Town Planner, Hong Kong. Pryer Terence, Management Pay Band 1, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. Pugh, Peggy, for serv Young People on the Isle of Man. Pugh, Walter Barry, lly Sen Storekeeper, MOD. Pullen, Joyce Winifred, for serv the Save the Children Fund in Wiltshire.

Quetteville, Hugh Ludlow de, for charitable serv. Quinney, David, Station Offr, Central Scotland Fire Brigade, serv the Fire Service. Qureshi, Parveen, mgr, Rotherham Multi-Cultural Centre, serv the commty.

Redman, Ellen Elizabeth, for serv the commty in Malmesbury, Wiltshire. Redpath, Cyril, for serv the Army Cadet Force in Northumbria. Reed, Lydia Elizabeth, Main exec, WJO Jennings Ltd, serv Public Transport. Rees, Alan Tait, for serv the commty in Edinburgh. Reid, Alistair, chm, Scottish Fishermans Organisation, serv the Fisheries ind. Rhydderch, Gwyn, Co-ordinator Brit Arts Festivals Association, serv the Arts. Rhys-Davies, Harriet Emily, for polit and publ serv. Richards, Dennis, for charitable serv in Penzance Cornwall. Riches, Bryan Robert, Sub-Divisional Offr, Suffolk Special Constabulary, serv the Police. Roberts, Edmund Caerwyn, for serv Agriculture in Wales. Roberts, John Aubrey, for serv the Wrexham Hospital League of Friends North Wales. Robertson, Moira Mary Ann, lly Custodian, Skara Brae. Robinson, Eric, for charitable serv in Nantwich, Cheshire. Robinson, Jeremy John Lawrence, Sen exec Offr, MoD. Robinson, John, mgg dir, S Robinson and Sons (Eng.) Ltd, serv the Construction ind.

Rodgers, Frank, for serv the Environment in Derbyshire. Rollo, David Gordon, for serv the Care of Wildlife in Northumberland. Roseveare, Olivia Margaret Lady, for serv educ in Malawi. Ross, Walter Wilson, Conductor, Penston Silver Band, East Lothian, serv Music. Routledge, Charles, Dresser, serv the Theatre. Routledge, David Walton, serv the commty in Hillingdon, Middlesex. Rowling, Harold, for serv the commty in Westmeston, East Sussex. Ruparell, Shantilal Hirji, for serv the commty in Harrow, Middlesex.

Saltonstall, James Edwin Ross, for serv Yachting and to Young People. Sankaran, Anne Mary, for serv the commty in Oldham Lancs. Saunders, Peter, chm, Groundwork Trust, Merthyr and Cynon, serv the Environment. Savage, Alan Digerson, for serv the Croydon Battle of Britain Memorial and to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Savage, John Robert, for serv the commty in Southwell, Notts. Sayer, Leslie Daniel, DSM, for serv the Telegraphist Air Gunr Association. Scaplehorn, Barry, lly Firefighter, Suffolk Cnty Fire Service, serv the Fire Services Benevolent Fund. Scarsbrook, Susan, Head, Sudbourne Primary School, Lambeth, London, serv Educ. Scatliffe, Tatica Ernestine, for serv nursing and voluntary work in Brit Virgin Islands. Scott, Leonard, lly Adviser on English Language, European Commn. Seaman, David Andrew, For serv Association Football. Seaman, Peter Jonathan, lly Chief Insp, Herts Constabulary, serv the Police. Sen, Sukumar, for serv the commty in Lochaber. Sewell, Dorothy, for serv the commty in Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire. Shaw, Robert James, for serv the Fishing ind. Sherwin, Patrick John, for serv Coastal Rowing. Shiach, Robert John, Cattleman, serv the Cattle ind in Banffshire. Shiel, William, for serv Tourism in Northumbria. Shore, Trevor Royston, Instructor/Examiner, Dorset Cnty Ccl Cycle Training Scheme, serv Road Safety. Silem, Joan, for charitable serv in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Simpson, Annie Mary, for serv Educ. Simpson, Sylvia Yvonne, for serv the Police. Skinner, Jean, School Crossing Patrol Warden, Kent Cnty Ccl, serv Road Safety.

Skinner, Robert, for serv the St Andrews Ambulance Association. Slater, David, for serv the commty in Worksop, Notts. Smart, Eileen Lorraine, Administrative asst, Dept of Trade and Indust. Smewin, Gwenneth Maude Muriel, lly hdteach, Dunmore Cnty Infants School, Abingdon, Oxon, serv Educ. Smith, Graham Arthur, Engineering mgr, Secure Products, Siemens Plessey Systems Ltd, serv Defence Technology. Smith, John McCrindle, DL, for serv the Magistracy and to the Police Committee in Essex. Smith, Barbara Antoinette, Sen Nurse mgr, Leicester Gen Hospital, serv Health Care. Smith, Brenda, for charitable serv. Smith, Carol Beverley, Motor Transport Driver, MoD. Smith, Pauline, for serv the Citizens Advice Bureau in Sale, Cheshire. Smith, Neville Maxwell Alexander, lly Chief Immigration Offr, Bermuda. Smith, The Reverend Canon John Reginald, for serv the commty in Bury Manchester. Smith, Thomas Robert, for serv the commty in High Wycombe Buckinghamshire. Soto, Robert, for serv Scuba diving Brit Virgin Islands. Spears, Stuart Alan, for serv the commty in Deal, Kent. Spiegelberg, Anthony William Assheton, TD, DL, for polit serv. Stadler, Olive Patricia, for serv Relate and to Family Mediation in Tyneside. Staples, Peter Edward Paul, lly Pay Band 11, HMSO. Stevenson, Jean, Typist/Clerical asst, Grange Academy, Kilmarnock, serv Educ. Stewart, John Kenneth, lly Retained Sub-Offr, Grampian Fire Brigade, serv the Fire Service. Stewart, Edith Margaret, Matron, Bangkok Nursing Home, Thailand. Stewart, Grace Teresa, for publ serv. Stoddart, Wilfrid Bowring, for serv Young People in Runcorn Cheshire. Strathdee, Duncan John, Bed and Breakfast Proprietor Perthshire, serv Tourism. Strathdee, Helen, Bed and Breakfast Proprietor Perthshire, serv Tourism. Sussman, Leslie, Member, LB Barnet, serv Local Govt. Sutherland, Helena, for serv the R British Legion Scotland. Swain, John Sanderson, for serv Grimsby Hospital, North East Lincs.

Tabert, James Edward Keir, Gen Medical Practitioner, Luton, Bedfordshire, serv Medicine. Taggart, Ian Michael Wade, TD, for serv Sailing for Disabled People. Tanner, David Harris, Team Leader, HM Board of Customs and Excise and Hon chm of Rex Blind Parties. Taylor, David Anthony, lly Area Water Quality mgr, National River Authority, *Anglian Region, serv the Environment.* Terrington, Carole Anne, for serv the commty in Sandon, Bedfordshire. Tew, Gwendoline, for serv the commty in Llandow, South Wales. Thatcher, Noel, for serv Athletics for Disabled People. Themistocleous, Heather, Headmistress, Junior (Anglo-Cypriot) School, Nicosia. Thew, Marshall, TD, For charitable and commty serv in Wirral.

Thomas, John Edwin, Leading Firefighter, West Midlands Fire Service, serv the Fire Service. Thomas, Martyn Edmund, mgg dir, Sulzer (UK) Pumps Ltd, serv the Engineering ind. Thomas, Gwendoline Muriel, exec Offr, DSS. Thomas, Miriam Ann, School Crossing Patrol, Newton Abbot, Devon Cnty Ccl, serv Road Safety. Thompson, Kenneth Charles, Pay Band 8, the Employment Service, Dept for Educ and Employment. Thompson, Neil Dennis, Sub-Offr (Retained), Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, serv the Fire Service. Thomson, David Stratten, for welf serv the commty Kenya. Till, Douglas Albert, for serv Training in Worcester. Timmis, Anthony Richard Shaw, for serv the Building ind and to the commty in Yeovil Somerset. Toomey, Dawn Pauline, Higher exec Offr, Office for National Statistics. Torre, Luis Eric Rupert de la, for serv The St Nazaire Society. Tovey, John Joseph, for serv Tourism in Cumbria. Townsend, Stephanie Catherine, exec Offr, Min of Agric, Fisheries and Food. Treitlein, Valerie Ann, Hon Brit Consul, Conakry. Trevennen, Rita, for serv the Citizens Advice Bureau in Penzance, Cornwall. Trollope, Arthur George Cecil, for serv Conservation and to the commty in London. Troup, Doris AP, Member, Parkinsons Disease Society, Aberdeen, serv Health Care. Tsui, Carlye Wai-Ling, JP, for serv the commty, Hong Kong. Tuckley, Brian, Safety Offr, Inst of Food Research, serv science. Tudball, Valentine Thomas, for serv the Brit commty in Beirut. Turley, Roberta Diane, lly Pte sec, Nuclear Electric plc, serv the Electricity ind.

Venables, Jean, dir, Venables Consultancy Services, serv Civil Engineering. Verdon, Thacker Keven, Ch exec Offr, the Lighting Association, serv Domestic Energy Efficiency. Vickerton, Beryl, clerk, Atwick Parish Ccl, serv local govt.

Waddell, John Hill, lly HM Insp of Immigration for Scotland and Northern Ireland, Home Off. Waddell, Christina Mary, for serv Victim Support and to Carers of Disabled People in Stirling. Waddington, Peter, for serv the commty in Downton, Wiltshire. Wagstaff, Ann Cunningham, exec Offr, MoD. Wakeling, Geoffrey James George, Sen Engineer, Leicestershire Cnty Ccl, serv Highways Improvement. Walker, Graham Basil, Coxswain/Mechanic, Wells Lifeboat, Norfolk, serv the RNLI. Walker, Mary, chm, Gen Committee of the Christie Hospital and Holt Radium Inst Women's Trust Fund, for charitable serv. Walker, Nancy Hamilton, editor, *Kinross Newsletter*, serv the commty in Kinross-shire. Walker, Patricia Ann, Valuation Referencer, Bd of In Rev. Walker, Sheila Mary, for charitable serv. Walley, Freda Inez, for serv the commty partic Prisoner Welfare, in Walsall. Wallis, Valerie Ann, Vice-chm, YMCA, serv Young People in Kent. Wardrobe, John, for serv Association Football for Young People. Ware, Margaret Victoria, Sen exec Offr, ODA. Warsi, Perween, mgg dir, S and A Foods Ltd, serv the Food Manufacturing ind.

Waters, Michael Julian Christopher, Dep polit Adviser, Hong Kong. Waterson, Robert William, for serv the commty in Norwich, Norfolk. Watling, Prof Roy, Head of Mycology, R Botanic Garden Edinburgh, serv science. Watson, Arthur Aiken, for serv the commty in Tarves, Aberdeenshire. Watson, Dennis Drysdale, Driver, Badgerline Bus Company (Thamesway), Southend, Essex, serv Public Transport. Watts, Simon, Chief Scientist, Racal Radar Defence Systems Ltd, for scient serv the Defence ind. Weaver, John Anthony, for serv the Anglican commty, Sliema, Malta. Webber, Geoffrey Wingyett, TD, for serv the commty on the Isle of Wight. Wells, Geoffrey Gilbert, for serv the commty in Wick, West Sussex. Westacott, Ronald Edward, for serv the commty in Seend, Wilts. Westmorland, The Reverend Colin Andrew, for serv the Church of Scotland Malta. Wheatley, Brenda Maria, Support mgr 3, the Buying Agency, Cabinet Office (Office of Public Service). White, Marguerite Elizabeth, for serv the commty in Liverpool. White, The Reverend Derek, for serv Homeless People in London. Whitehouse, Derek Frederick, for serv the commty in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. Whitford, Brian Peter, for serv the Personnel Protective Equipment ind.

Whittaker, Ivan William, Craftsman, National Grid Company plc, serv ind relations. Wicks, Keith Anthony, Head of Information Technology and Communications, Port of London Authority, serv the Port Authority. Wild, Harry Holmes St John, for serv the commty in Rochdale Lancashire. Williams, Henry Winston, for serv the Brit commty Uruguay. Williams, John Michael, for serv the commty partic the arts, in Burton, Derbyshire. Williams, Lyndhurst, Constable, Met Pol, serv the police and to ind relations. Williams, Edith Frances, for serv the commty in Brislington, Bristol. Williams, Richard, for polit service. Williams, Richard Douglas, for serv journalism and to the commty in Cornwall. Williams, Roy, for polit service. Williams, Thomas Alan, Sen Scientist, Phosphates Group, Albright and Wilson Ltd, for scient serv the chemical ind. Wong, Judy, Shuk-ching JP, Assistant dir of Immigration, Hong Kong. Wong, Sista Annie Margaret, Kam-lin Principal, St Pauls Secondary and St Pauls Convent Schools, Hong Kong. Wood, Grace Ellen, for serv elderly people in Twerton, Bath. Wood, Marjorie, for serv the R Parks of London. Wooden, Margaret Jane, *School Crossing Patrol, Lancs Cnty Ccl*, serv road safety and to the commty. Woolnough, Alfred Thomas, driver, Met Pol, serv the Police. Wren, Simon William, lly Higher exec Offr, MOD. Wright, Madge Margaret, for serv mentally handicapped people.

Yallop, Fred, emergency engineer, for humanitarian serv the former Yugoslavia. Yeung, James, Chi-kin Chief Lab Offr, Hong Kong. Young, Charles Henry, for serv the commty in South Shields, Tyne and Wear. Young, John Ralph, Technical Liaison mgr, Lever Brothers Ltd, serv the chemical ind. Young, John William, Brigade Treasurer, lly chm, Eng and Wales Committee, Boys Brigade, serv The Boys Brigade.

Royal Victorian Order

Knight Grand Cross (GCVO)

Aird, Capt Sir Alastair Sturgis, KCVO, private sec and Comptr to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Fitzpatrick, Gen Sir Geoffrey Richard Desmond, GCB, DSO, MBE, MC, Gold Stick.

Knight Commander (KCVO)

Lowther, John Luke, CBE, Lord Lt of Northamptonshire.

Commander (CVO)

Cavendish, The Lady Elizabeth Georgina Alice, LVO, extra lady in waiting to the Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon. Caws, Richard Byron, CBE, former Crown Estate Commr. Gilbert, Philip Stephen, OBE, broadcaster. Holdsworth, Sir George Trevor, trustee, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Lieutenant (LVO)

Blair, Capt Robert Neil, RN, private sec to the Duke of York and to Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy. Blair, Hamish, Sen exec Offr, Scott Off. Brown, Laurence Albert, serv the R Collection. Buttress, Donald Reeve, surv of the fabric, Westminster Abbey. Frahm, Bernard Joseph, MVO, serv the Crown on royal visits to New Zealand. Laidlaw, Cdr Thomas Dixon, QPM, Met Pol. Lichfield, Leonora Mary The Countess of, extra lady in waiting to the Princess R. Percival, Allan Arthur, former press sec to the Prince of Wales. Sutherland, Alexander Hay, ch publity offr, Scott Off.

Member (MVO)

Bailey, Christian Mary, curator in the Prince of Wales. Booth, Frederick, ch heraldic painter, College of Arms. Brown, Ann Teresa, MBE, former Brit Overseas Trade Board. Butler, Matthew Nicholas, former asst private sec to the Prince of Wales. Clark, Pamela Margaret, dep regr, R Archives, Windsor Castle. Elliott Reginald, Higher exec Offr, Crown Estate, Windsor. Hampton, Valerie Winifred, pers sec to Princess Alexandra, the hon Lady Ogilvy. Hunter-Craig, Claire Elizabeth, sec, household of the Duke of Edinburgh. Jackson, Chief Yeoman Warder Norman William, HM Tower of London. Masson, Alexander, hd gamekeeper, Balmoral Estate. Pepper, John Ronald, fmrly of Collingwood and Company Limited. Robinson, Insp Stephen Lionel, Rty and Diplomatic Protection Dept, Met Pol. Sly, Eileen Margaret, fmrly the Westminster Abbey Trust. Stewart, William Albert, hd warden, Palace of Holyroodhouse. Sutcliffe, Prudence Sarah, asst curator of the print room, Windsor Castle. Tabor, Lt Col Patrick John, former equerry to the Prince of Wales.

Royal Victorian Medal

Hart, John Nelson, gamekeeper, Sandringham Estate. Hodson, Keith, stud hand, R Studs. *James Constable Anthony Claud*, Rty and Diplomatic Protection Dept, Met Pol. Kerr, John Trodden, leading palace attendant, Windsor Castle. King, Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic (Mechanical) Andrew Kevin, HM yacht *Britannia*. Lines, Richard Clive, painter, Sandringham Estate. Morris, Musician William Huw, HM yacht *Britannia*. Murrell, Sgt Paul Andrew George, Norfolk Constabulary. Riches, Peter Leonard, fmn gardener, Crown Estate, Windsor. Shrubb, Constable Mervyn John, Rty and Diplomatic Protection Dept, Met Pol. Wetherill, David, sacristan, St Georges Chapel, Windsor Castle. Willison, John Herbert, fmrly of Truefitt and Hill Limited, act PO Marine Engineering Mechanic (Electrical) Winstone Barry John, HM yacht *Britannia*.

Diplomatic & Overseas List

ORDER OF ST MICHAEL & ST GEORGE

Knight Grand Cross (GCMG)

Coles, Sir (Arthur) John, KCMG, Permanent Under-Sec of State, FCO.

Knight Commander (KCMG)

Gore-Booth, The Hon David Alwyn, CMG, Brit High Commr, New Delhi. Jay, Michael Hastings, CMG, HM, Ambassador, Paris.

Commander (CMG)

Brooking, Maj Gen Patrick Guy, CB, MBE, serv UK German rels in Berlin. Cary, Anthony Joyce, cnsllr, FCO. Clibborn, John-Donovan Nelson dalla Rosa, cnsllr, FCO. Ford, Antony, former cnsllr, FCO. MacGlashan, Maureen Elizabeth, HM, Ambassador, Holy See. Ricks, David Trulock, OBE, former dir, Br Ccl, France. Synnott, Hilary Nicholas Hugh, *former minister, Brit High Commn, New Delhi.*

Royal Navy

ORDER OF THE BATH

Companion (CB)

Pack, Maj Gen Simon James, CBE. Revell, Surgeon Vice Adml Anthony Leslie, OHS.

Knight Commander (KBE)

Moore, Vice Adml Michael Antony Claes, LVO.

ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Commander (CBE)

Branscombe, Capt Paul, OBE, R Navy. Hutchison, Capt William Keith, R Navy. Read, Capt Keith Frank, R Navy.

Officer (OBE)

Ambrose, Cdr Peter David, R Navy. Bavall-Hunt, Cdr Brian Paul, R Navy. Bush, Maj Stephen John Dryland, R Marines. Channon, Cdr Michael John, R Navy. Johnstone-Burt, Cdr Charles Anthony, R Navy. Linstead-Smith, Cdr Peter John, R Navy. McAleese, Cdr George, R Navy.

Member (MBE)

Baker, CPO (Operations) (Radar) Alan James, D077088R. Baker, CPO Air Engineering Artificer (L) Stephen Michael, D109087R. Cook, Lt Cdr Harry Colin, R Navy. Cronin, Lt Cdr Alan Robert, R Navy. Elsworth, Lt Cdr Reginald Keith, R Navy. Foster, Lt Cdr David Michael, R Navy. Goodwin, Sgt Steven Paul, R Marines, P040469W. Gravestock, Lt Cdr (SCC) Denise Lilian, R Navy Reserve. Hatton, Lt Cdr (Acting Cdr) Hubert Frederick, R Navy. Jones, WO Peter Robert. Kings, Lt Cdr Simon John Nicholson, R Navy. Lacey, WO Michael Stephen. Lawton, WO Class 1 Peter, R Marines. Leggett, Lt Cdr (now Cdr) Christopher Charles, R Navy. Mawson, Lt Cdr Anthony Joseph, R Navy. Milne, WO Harold. Pell, Lt Cdr (Acting Cdr) Geoffrey Charles, R Navy. Smith, CPO (Diver) John Robert, D053657P. Turner, Colour Sgt Alan Keith, R Marines, P032549Y. Wallace, WO Nigel Frank. Woodford, Lt (now Lt Cdr) Geoffrey Ian, R Navy. Yui, WO Simon, Kwok Choi.

The Army

ORDER OF THE BATH

Knight Grand Cross (GCB)

Wheeler, Gen Sir Roger Neil, KCB, CBE, ADC Gen, (475595), fmrly The R Irish Regiment.

Knight Commander (KCB)

Cowan, Lt Gen Samuel, CBE, (474845), fmrly R Corps of Signals. Pike, Lt Gen Hew William Royston, DSO, MBE, (472599), fmrly the Parachute Regiment.

Companion (CB)

Phipps, Maj Gen Jeremy Joseph Julian, (472598) fmrly The Queen's Own Hussars. Scott, Maj Gen Michael Ian Eldon, CBE, DSO, (467628), fmrly Scots Guards. Willcocks, Maj Gen Michael Alan, (476673) fmrly R Regiment of Artillery.

ORDER OF ST MICHAEL & ST GEORGE

Commander (CMG)

Walker, Lt Gen Sir Michael John Dawson, KCB, CBE, (481887), fmrly The R Anglian Regiment.

ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Commander (CBE)

Delves, Maj Gen Cedric Norman George, DSO, OBE, (485712), fmrly the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment. Good, Brig Kevin John Watson, ADC (472543), fmrly R Army Ordnance Corps. Shempton, Col (Acting Brig) Keith, (487055) fmrly the Cheshire Regiment. Whitley, Col (Acting Brig) Albert Edward, MBE, (495259), former Corps of R Engineers.

Officer (OBE)

Barrett, Lt Col Peter John, (482686) Adjutant Gens Corps (SPS). McDonnell, Lt Col Brian, (519404) The R Anglian Regiment. McGarr, Lt Col George, (508552) The R Logistic Corps. Nutt, Lt Col Brian, (489575) Corps of R Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Prentice, Lt Col Keith Henry Neville, (488202) R Regiment of Artillery. Reason, Acting Col John David, (467319) Devonshire Army Cadet Force, Territorial Army. Sainsbury, Lt Col John David, TD, (453727), R Regiment of Artillery (Volunteers), Territorial Army. Salmon, Lt Col John Alexander Broome, (486736) the Princess of Wales's R Regiment. Thomson, Lt Col John Alexander, (496402) the Cheshire Regiment (Volunteers) Territorial Army. West, Lt Col Philip Roy, (485857) R Regiment of Artillery.

Member (MBE)

Alker, The Rev John Stephen, (513792) Chaplain to the Forces (3rd Class), R Army Chaplains Dept. Bain, Maj James Victor Glen, (520977) the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Bessey, 24821742 Cpl Christopher David Ernest, the R Logistic Corps. Bishop, Lt Russell John, (546098) the Parachute Regiment. Black, Maj Crispin Nicholas, (511814) Welsh Guards. Boyd, Maj Alexander Thomas, (496287) the R Logistic Corps. Bright, Maj Joseph, (518051) Adjutant Gens Corps (SPS). Brown, 24652448 Sgt (Acting Staff Sgt) David William, the R Logistic Corps. Buchanan, Maj Malcolm Hugh Peter, (495490) the R Logistic Corps. Card 24330851 WO Class 1 Andrew Kenneth George, the R Logistic Corps. Cheetham, Maj Steven, TD, (495676), Corps of R Engineers (Volunteers), Territorial Army. Cobb, Acting Lt Col John, (448934) Stonyhurst College Combined Cadet Force, Territorial Army. Collinson, Maj Gavin Terence, (501572) the R Logistic Corps. Cooper, 24563002 Staff Sgt Anthony Raymond, Adjutant Gens Corps (RMP). Crawford, 24185755 WO Class 1 Alan John, Scots Guards. Crook, 24198806 WO Class 1 William, Adjutant Gens Corps (SPS).

Daniell, 23962020 Staff Sgt Graham Stuart, Corps of R Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Denham, 24511850 Sgt (Acting Colour Sgt) Stephen, the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment. Flannigan, 24072935 Staff Sgt John James, the Light Dragoons. France, Capt John William Alexander, BEM, (508406), the Green Howards (Volunteers), Territorial Army. Gill, 24750683 Cpl Michael Sean, Corps of R Engineers. Gordon, Maj Richard Duncan Brownrigg, (513813) Adjutant Gens Corps (ETS). Griffiths, Maj Paul Anthony Philip, (517124) R Regiment of Artillery. Gurung, Capt (Queen's Gurkha Offr) Dharmendra, (537028) the R Gurkha Rifles. Gurung, Maj (Gurkha Commnd Offr) Lilbahadur, (513800) Queen's Gurkha Signals. Harris-Ward, Maj Leslie, TD, (502300), the Parachute Regiment (Volunteers), Territorial Army. Holley, Maj Lester Andrew, (505640) the R Gurkha Rifles.

Jackson Maj Anthony Lovell, (509141) R Regiment of Artillery. Kemp, Acting Maj John Frederick, (486467) Kent Army Cadet Force, Territorial Army. Keogh, 24011748 WO Class 2 Christopher, R Regiment of Artillery. Kirkpatrick, 24256499 Cpl of Horse Ian, the Blues and Rs. Lawther, Maj Robert Scott, (520854) the R Irish Regiment. LeQuelenec, Maj Allan Charles, (520025), R Army Medical Corps. Leighton, Maj Philip John, (509537) the Green Howards. Licence, Maj Richard Allen, (530853) R Corps of Signals. Lloyd, Maj Simon Jonathan Alun, (499742) R Regiment of Artillery. MacKinnon, 24435856 WO Class 2 John, Corps of R Engineers. MacLean, Lt Col Donald Anderson, (Retired). Marsden, Acting Lt Col Peter David, (473626) Monkton Combe School Combined Cadet Force, Territorial Army. Morrissey, 24335098 WO Class 1 Terence George, Adjutant Gens Corps (SPS). Nye, Lt Stuart Joseph, (546430) the Princess of Wales's R Regiment. O'Connor 24853200 L Cpl (Acting Cpl) Derrick Anthony, Corps of R Engineers. Oliver, 24418072 Colour Sgt Stuart Owen, The R Regiment of Fusiliers. Partington Lt (Acting Capt) Nigel Derek, (546198) R Army Medical Corps. Pitchforth, Capt (Acting Maj) Brian William (537833) the Parachute Regiment.

Preece, 24254852 WO Class 1 Joseph Thomas, the Light Dragoons. Ralfe, Maj (Acting Lt Col) Graham Evan William (510624) Adjutant Gens Corps (SPS). Richards, 24565364 WO Class 2 John Joseph, Adjutant Gens Corps (RMP). Robson, W0801111 Staff Sgt Sandra, the R Logistic Corps. Schofield, Maj Philip James Frances, (495231) the R Green Jackets. Shapland, Maj Michael Peter, (504918) R Tank Regiment. Sheppard, Maj Alastair Colin, (508235) Corps of R Engineers. Somerset, Acting Lt Col Robin Fitzroy, (414981) Winchester College Combined Cadet Force, Territorial Army. Stewart, 24386268 WO Class 2 Kevin, R Regiment of Artillery. Sutherland, Capt John, (537667) the Highlanders. Warren, Maj Robert William, (513382) Adjutant Gens Corps (RMP).

Royal Air Force

ORDER OF THE BATH

Companion (CB)

Carleton, Air Vice-Marshal Geoffrey Wellesley, R Air Force. Sherrington, Air vice Marshal Terence Brian, OBE, R Air Force. Order of the Bath

ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Commander (CBE)

Beazley, Gp Capt Roger Hubert, AFC, R Air Force (rtd). Gibson, Gp Capt George William, R Air Force (rtd). Tyack, A Cdre Ernest William, R Air Force.

Officer (OBE)

Barter, W Cdr Michael Carl, (8026633) R Air Force. Erskine Crum, W Cdr Walter Simon, (0608265) R Air Force. Gillingham, W Cdr Nigel Kenneth, (5203514) R Air Force. Hinder, W Cdr Malcolm Kenneth, (0207878) RAF Volunteer Reserve (Training). Jones, W Cdr Michael John, (0685361) RAF. Langman W Cdr Brian David, (0609376) RAF. Moran, W Cdr (now Gp Capt) Christopher Hugh, MVO, (5202768), RAF. Sims, W Cdr Stephen Ronald, (5203336) RAF. Williams, W Cdr Robert Adrian, (5204463) RAF.

Member (MBE)

Bennett, F Sgt Ronald John, (D8011572) RAF. Beresford, Flt Lt Ian Michael, (8151887) RAF. Biddleston, WO George Arthur, (D8068721) RAF. Brown, Sgt Karl Richard, (D8126056) RAF. Butler, Flt Lt (now Sq Ldr) Stephen John, (8080431) RAF. Chiddention, Sq Ldr Sean, (8028456) RAF. Cubin, Flt Lt Andrew, (8027993) RAF. Cummings, Flt Lt Neil, (3145881) RAF Volunteer Reserve (Training).

Deacon, Cpl Anthony David, (R8198216) RAF. Dean, Sq Ldr Brian, (4278701) RAF (rtd). Doherty, Junior Technician Peter, (E8254300) RAF. Doyley, Cpl Christine, (E8233551) RAF. Gillespie, Sq Ldr Ian Roderic, (2618287) RAF (rtd). Gough, WO Anthony John, BEM, (N1944467), RAF. Green, Cpl (now Acting Sgt) Alistair Colin, (B8213475) RAF. Hatch WO Michael John, (M0593513) RAF. Hopkins, Sq Ldr Mark William Gardner, (2625781) RAF. Kearney, WO William James Cameron, BEM, (D1949781), RAF. Kennedy, Sgt Gary, (L8001367) RAF.

Martin, Sgt Ray, (A8115128) RAF. Medland, WO Brian David, (R1949361) RAF (rtd). Mulloy, Cpl (now Acting Sgt) Kevin John, (F8201300) RAF. Partington, Cpl Ian William, (T8153337) RAF. Sim, Sq Ldr Vivienne Alexandra, (2797569) RAF (rtd). Smith, WO Keith Alexander, (P8089172) RAF. Smyth, Sq Ldr Steven Glynn, (8025529) RAF.

Walsh, WO Barry, (U4287360) RAF. Wildman, Junior Technician Peter Allan, (D8410829) R Air Force. Wilkinson, Sq Ldr Timothy Andrew, (5203138) RAF. Woolfson, Master Aircrew Alistair John, (T8018944) RAF.

Royal Red Cross

ARRC

Ward, Flt Lt Phillipa Jayne, (0409397) Princess Marys RAF Nursing Service.

Weir Sq Ldr Hazel, (0409276) Princess Mary's RAF Nursing Service.

Queen's Police Medal

Allen, Patrick John, Detective Sgt, R Ulster Constabulary. Bayliss, Anthony Richard, Detective Superintendent, Warwickshire Constabulary. Braithwaite, Keith, Chief Superintendent, R Hong Kong Police. Breen, Frank Joseph, Detective Constable, Thames Valley Police. Briggs, Michael, Cdr, Met Pol. Brown, Andrew Gibson, Assistant Ch Const, Lothian and Borders Police. Campbell, Trevor William, Detective Insp, R Ulster Constabulary. Coulter, William Joseph, Sgt, R Ulster Constabulary. Eggington, Eileen Margaret, Detective Chief Superintendent, Met Pol. Fox, Christopher, Assistant Ch Const (designated), Warwickshire Constabulary. Glover, Christopher John, Chief Superintendent, R Hong Kong Police. Griffiths, William, Cdr, Met Pol. Jones, Gareth, lly Detective Superintendent, North Wales Police. Kenworthy, David Robertson, Assistant Ch Const (designated), Avon and Somerset Constabulary. Lau, Chun-sing, Chief Superintendent, R Hong Kong Police. Manning, Roger John, Chief Superintendent, Staffordshire Police. Moore, Graham, Assistant Ch Const (designated), Cambshire Constabulary. Nicholls, Terence Raymond, Constable, Met Pol. Nicholson, William Ian, Chief Superintendent, R Hong Kong Police. Oake, Robin Edgar Norman, Ch Const, Isle of Man Constabulary. Orr, John, OBE, Ch Const, Strathclyde Police. Pichen, Peter John, Superintendent (Divisional Cdr), West Mercia Constabulary. Potts, Colin, Chief Insp (Divisional Cdr), Greater Manchester Police. Rae, William, Ch Const, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary. Rogers, Gordon Michael, lly Chief Superintendent, Wiltshire Constabulary. Sandall, Roger Edward, Chief Superintendent (Divisional Cdr), Norfolk Constabulary. Scott-Lee, Paul Joseph, Assistant Ch Const (designated), Suffolk Constabulary. Thomas, Richard Owen, Assistant Ch Const (designated), Gwent Constabulary.

Queen's Fire Service Medal

Clenaghan, John, Divisional Offr Grade 1, Strathclyde Fire Brigade. Dale, Peter John, Chief Fire Offr, Staffordshire Fire Service. Dixon, Alan Kenneth, Assistant Divisional Offr, Cleveland Fire Brigade. Lam, Chun-man, Chief Fire Offr, R Hong Kong Fire Service. Lobban, Alexander James, Fireman, Grampian Fire Brigade.

Monk, Kenneth George, lly Chief Fire Offr, Derbyshire Fire Service. Moore, Raymond, Assistant Chief Fire Offr, Northern Ireland Fire Brigade. Seaman, Alan Keith, lly Temporary Chief Fire Offr, South Yorkshire Fire Service.

international

significant shorts

North Korea sends mixed signals

A day after apologising for a submarine incursion into South Korea, North Korea said yesterday it was ready to take the first steps towards peace talks and would resume dismantling its nuclear threat.

Yet, in a day of mixed signals, it lashed out at "butchers" in Seoul as the ashes of 24 North Koreans shot after landing in the South from a submarine were handed back across the border. Its praise of the infiltrators as "martyrs" and "heroes" contrasted with its words of contrition on Sunday. *Reuters – Seoul*

China launches Tibet manhunt

China has launched a manhunt across Tibet, tightened airport security and offered a reward of one million yuan (£70,000) for the arrest of culprits who exploded a bomb in Lhasa last week, officials said. The bomb exploded early on Christmas Day outside city government offices in the Tibetan capital. *Reuters – Peking*

India looks to Taj Mahal

India's Supreme Court, cracking down on chemical and carbon fumes threatening the Taj Mahal, ordered almost 300 coal-based industries in its vicinity to close by the end of 1997.

The court, delivering a judgment in a public interest case, also ordered officials to cut off coke and coal supplies to the industries in the area around the monument. *Reuters – New Delhi*

Unpaid wages worry Russia

Unpaid wages and pensions was the number one public concern in Russia this year, displacing the presidential election and the war in Chechnya, according to a year-end poll released yesterday. *AP – Moscow*

New Year's aid to Lima hostages

The Red Cross says it will try to brighten the New Year for the 83 hostages still held by left-wing rebels, in the ambassador's residence in Lima, with deliveries of fresh clothes, shoes, candles, disinfectant and mail from home.

The guerrillas allowed the captives to send mail yesterday and receive it today. It is the third time the rebels have permitted an exchange of mail.

On Sunday, rebels allowed the Red Cross to deliver 40 pounds of imported dog food for two German shepherds belonging to the Japanese Ambassador Morihita Aoki, who is also a hostage. *AP – Lima*

US doctors face drugs ban

Doctors in California and Arizona who prescribe illegal drugs could face criminal charges under a plan approved by President Clinton to counter state laws legalising marijuana.

Voters in those two states approved measures in November that relax restrictions on the medical use of some illegal drugs, such as marijuana. "These two propositions simply do not affect federal law," said Barry McCaffrey, the President's drug-policy chief. *AP – Washington*

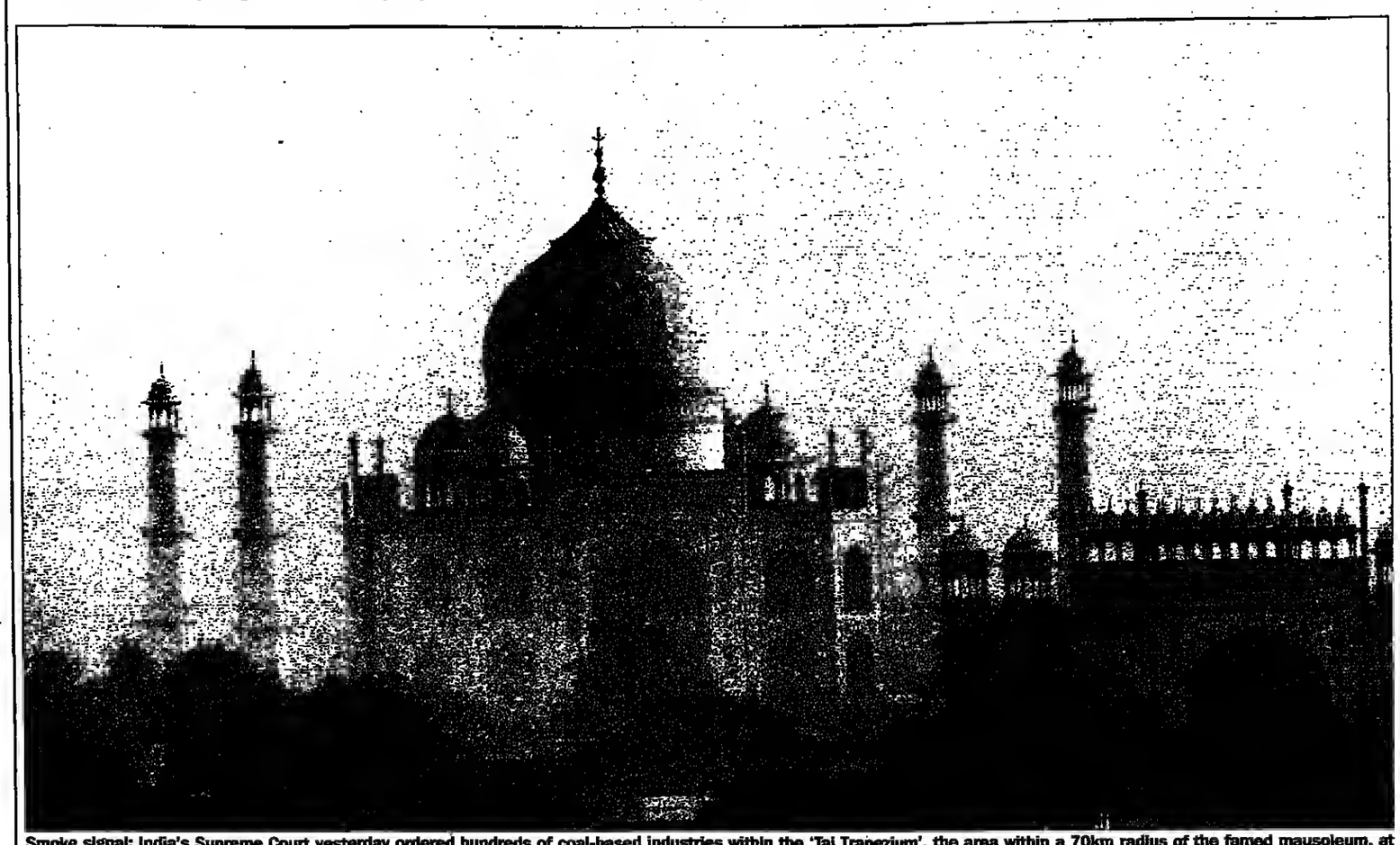
Burglars put to shame

Taipei is to parade convicted burglars through its streets in glass-paneled vans in an attempt to curb the Taiwanese capital's rising crime rate.

"A few countries have burglars' hands chopped off," said the mayor, Chen Shui-bian. "We can't do that, but we can still take some measures to alarm the burglars."

The van will carry a sign saying "The Burglar is Here" together with their names and those of his or her parents. *AP – Taipei*

Industry pays heavy price for damage to Moghul emperor's greatest gift



Smoke signal: India's Supreme Court yesterday ordered hundreds of coal-based industries within the 'Taj Trapezium', the area within a 70km radius of the famed mausoleum, at Agra, to close by the end of 1997, as the monument has already been severely damaged by carbon smoke and sulphur dioxide fumes that causes the rock to decay

Singapore slings democratic ideal

Island's ruling party makes sure of election victory, writes **Stephen Vines**

With a victory in Thursday's general election already in the bag, it might be thought that Singapore's ruling People's Action Party (PAP), which has ruled the city state since independence, would take a more relaxed approach to the nine-day election campaign.

However relaxing does not come naturally to a party which believes that no sledgehammer is quite big enough to squash a nut, even one so modest as the five under-financed, poorly-organised opposition parties.

Voters have been told that should they dare to vote for any of these parties, they can say goodbye to renovation of public housing in the areas which elect non-PAP legislators, and yesterday the electorate was given a chilling warning that Singapore could quickly be reduced to the rubble of civil war Beirut if the wrong people were allowed into parliament.

The warning came at a rally addressed by Lee Kwan Yew, the grandfather of Singapore-an politics who has stepped down as Prime Minister but casts a mighty shadow over Goh Chok Tong, his presentationally-challenged successor. Mr Lee's son, the deputy prime minister Lee Hsien Loong, told the rally that incomes had risen by 80 per cent in the last twelve years, giving Singaporeans the sixth-highest living standards in the world. This was achieved, he said "not by sitting back and talking opposition politics".

In the last election the embattled opposition won 39 per cent of the votes but a mere four seats in the 81-seat parliament. This time round it will be even harder for the opposition to win seats. The rules have changed yet again with a redrawing of constituency boundaries and an expanded system of block voting for mega-constituencies.

Nevertheless, the PAP is worried because its share of the popular vote has steadily declined. Opposition candidates have been labelled as liars, cheats, opportunists and practically everything else.

One candidate for the opposition Worker's Party, Tang Liang Hong, has achieved the rare distinction of becoming the single most important election issue. The PAP accuses him of Chinese chauvinism because of alleged remarks questioning the predominance of English-language educated and Christian cabinet members over Chinese-educated representatives.

The Singapore media has enthusiastically taken up the hue and cry against Mr Tang, covering whole pages with articles about his misdemeanours. Newspapers and broadcasters strongly object to suggestions that they are state controlled, but they give every impression of campaigning for the PAP. Nevertheless, election time is one of the few opportunities the opposition gets to air its opinion. It appears to be hitting some sensitive spots by stressing the need for less authoritarian government, criticising high ministerial salaries and generally urging the government to give its citizens more freedom.

Emphasising the notion of clean government, the PAP candidates are criss-crossing Singapore dressed in squeaky-clean white clothing broken only by the lightning symbol of the PAP, which bares an uncanny resemblance to the symbol used by the old British Union of Fascists.

Alarm bells toll for Milosevic

Mark Heinrich
Reuters

Belgrade — Serbia's pro-democracy movement has planned a New Year's Eve extravaganza of rallies and parties with alarm clocks set to ring at midnight, as if time were running out for President Slobodan Milosevic.

Emboldened by Western solidarity, demonstrators protesting at election fraud hit the streets in the Yugoslav capital Belgrade and other cities and towns yesterday for the 43rd straight day, despite the ban on street marches imposed by the Serbian police after a 24 December riot in Belgrade involving opposition protesters and government loyalists.

The wave of protest is the most sustained popular push for democratisation in 50 years of one-party rule.

Thousands of Belgrade university students tried to march across the Sava River bridge yesterday but were blocked by police. Some policemen smiled as students cried "Happy New Year", but stood their ground.

Up to a quarter of a million people have rallied daily in Serbia against Mr Milosevic's annulment of municipal elections last month in 14 towns and cities, including Belgrade, won by the coalition of opposition groups, Zajedno (Together).

The ruling Socialists (SPS) cited "irregularities" in the vote. But Zajedno, supported later by the findings of a special delegation from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), accused the SPS of blatant vote fraud and demanded that its victories be reinstated.

Ranks of Zajedno supporters have dwindled since sub-zero weather set in a week ago. To keep up enthusiasm Zajedno has organised a costume ball for children, scheduled for today, followed by a procession and a huge party in Republic Square.

A potentially important expression of support for Zajedno arrived in a letter which, though unsigned and unauthenticated, appeared to be from dissident officers of the Yugoslav army. The group warned Mr Milosevic in the letter, read out before 50,000 Zajedno activists in Belgrade on Sunday, that they would refuse to fire on demonstrators.

The letter was addressed to Mr Milosevic, to the army commander General Momcilo Perisic and to pro-democracy university students in Nis, Serbia's second largest city. The message included a warning that the opposition would be toppled in its turn if it became autocratic in power.

The letter also suggested that any move by Mr Milosevic to declare a state of emergency would either collapse or pit the army against his large security police force. The army helped Mr Milosevic to crush demonstrations in 1991, but has remained neutral during his conflict with Zajedno.

General Perisic pledged during a meeting with the Yugoslav federal president Zoran Lilic yesterday to preserve stability, the official news agency Tanjug said.

Mr Milosevic is now considering how to respond to last week's critical report from the OSCE. The West has warned Mr Milosevic that financial aid for Yugoslavia's wrecked economy will not be forthcoming unless he concedes electoral losses and starts broad democratic reform.

When patriotism is a new shirt

Teresa Poole
Peking

"Let them wear shirts!" The cry has gone up in many of China's beleaguered textile factories. For the world's biggest country is suffering from what must be one of the world's biggest manufacturing gluts. Warehouses across the land are stuffed with men's shirts – 1.5 billion of them.

And that is not all. China's state-owned factories have been busy churning out other unwanted goods. Stockpiles, as 1996 draws to a close, include 20 million unsold bicycles, 10 million watches, and 250,000 motor vehicles.

Ye Zhen, the spokesman for the State Statistical Bureau, said yesterday that by the end of October the value of goods held in stock by factories was 540 billion yuan (£41bn), of which a hefty one-third was "due to over-production" by enterprises which had turned a blind eye to the fact that their goods were not selling. Many of these state factories seem loath to forget the cosy old ways of the former centrally-planned economy, when goods were produced to fill quotas rather than orders.

While the patriotic Chinese man's duty is now clearly to go out and buy a shirt – or three – the government can at least take cheer that it met this year's economic targets with aplomb. Those sceptical of Chinese statistics might wonder how 1996's figures can be produced before the year end, but according to Mr Ye, economic growth was 9.7 per cent while annual inflation dropped to just 6 per cent, down from 14.8 per cent in 1995. The economy is forecast to grow by 10.5 per cent in 1997.

Where then does that leave all those shirts? In the warehouse for the time being. The Chinese remain avid shoppers, with retail sales in 1995 showing growth of 13 per cent. But they are also becoming more discerning. Badly designed shirts, even if cheap, stay on the hanger. In this, the bicycle kingdom of the world, the fact that the number of stockpiled bicycles is equivalent to 80 per cent of last year's domestic production suggests that the manufacturers have lost touch with the consumer. Good quality brands still sell, but the thrifty Chinese cyclist sees no reason to trade in his bone-shaker until it falls to pieces.

All these state-owned factories survive, because the social cost in terms of lost jobs would make closure unthinkable. Mr Ye said 45 per cent of China's state enterprises are loss-making, and their combined losses have this year (1996) increased by nearly half. They keep afloat on a sea of unpaid bills; the so-called "triangular debt" between Chinese state enterprises – money which they owe each other – now stands at a record 900 billion yuan (£69bn), even bigger than the shirt mountain.

Check-mates: Two photographers playing chess in St Petersburg, Russia's second largest city, while waiting for potential customers. Temperatures have dipped as low as -30C as Russians prepare for their Christmas and New Year festivities Photograph: Reuters

Hebron deal stuck on the small print

Eric Silver
Jerusalem

Having failed to meet a Christmas deadline, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators were working against the clock last night to seal an Israeli redeployment in Hebron before the new year.

There was more scepticism among observers outside the bargaining chamber than in. Spokesmen for both teams remained confident that an agreement was imminent after late-night talks in Gaza on Sunday between the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, and the Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai.

Not for the first time, Mr Mordechai announced afterwards that they had resolved most of the issues still in dispute. The Iraqi-born ex-general seems to have established a more affable dialogue with Mr Arafat than the more doctrinaire Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has managed. But in the end it is Mr Netanyahu who will decide.

The Prime Minister assured right-wing and religious coalition MPs yesterday that the eventual Hebron accord would be "better on 10 counts" for the security of the 450 Jewish settlers than that signed by his Labour predecessor, Shimon Peres, at the beginning of the year.

The American mediator, Dennis Ross, who flew back to Israel last night from a break in the United States, was expected to give the talks an extra push. The Palestinians want to invite American and Egyptian representatives to witness an agreement.

Before joining the negotiators in a Jerusalem hotel yesterday, Mr Mordechai told reporters: "I expect an agreement to be concluded and signed within a very short time."

Jibril Rajoub, the Palestinians' West Bank security chief, hoped Mr Arafat and Mr Netanyahu could meet today and sign a deal. Another Palestinian negotiator, Saeb Erakat, predicted that Israeli troops would evacuate most of Arab Hebron, the last West Bank town under occupation, within a week of the signing.

The main stumbling block was a last-minute demand by the Palestinian leader to station joint security teams at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, the traditional burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

According to the original Peres-Arafat agreement, Israel was to have exclusive oversight of security at the tomb. Israeli officials yesterday accused Mr Arafat of going back on his word and trying to get more concessions. David Bar-Illan, a senior advisor to Mr Netanyahu, said a summit could take place today if the Palestinians dropped these demands.

Father Frost and the Snow Maiden deliver Russia's winter warmer

MOSCOW DAYS

You think it is cold in western Europe at the moment? Try coming to Russia. In Moscow, the temperature has dropped to -30C – the temperature at which cars seize up, street flower-sellers protect their roses in glass cabinets heated by candles and Russian parents bundle up their children not only in hats and scarves but also in face masks.

The frost has not, however, deterred the crowds from joining the new year shopping rush. Yesterday, Novoslobodskaya market was heaving with people in heavy overcoats and fur hats, struggling to buy tinned salmon and mayonnaise for the festive meal, and "yolkas" – fir trees – for the festive mood.

Russian New Year is a curious mixture of domestic traditions and practices adopted from abroad. The atheist Communists stressed it in preference to Christmas and, although the Orthodox Church now has full freedom, New Year remains more popular than Russian Christmas on 6-7 January.

Although Russia is covered with fir trees, the tradition of putting presents under the tree was actually imported from Germany. The Orthodox Church initially disapproved of this foul foreign influence but the Communists put a red star on top of the tree and made it Russia's own.

The presents are delivered by Father Frost, the Russian Santa Claus. Instead of a red-nosed reindeer, he relies on a female helper called Snegurochka or the Snow Maiden. Her main job is to restrain Father Frost from drinking too much vodka on his rounds, although often the Snow Maiden has to be carried home too.

Those who refuse to believe in Father Frost and the Snow Maiden know that Mum and Dad really got the presents, after fighting to get to the counter at Detsky Mir (Children's World), the big toy shop which glitters incongruously next to the forbidding Lubyanka, secret police headquarters. Detsky Mir used to sell cheap Soviet-made toys such as wooden tanks, which foreign tourists adored and Russian children hated. Now the shop is full of imported radio-controlled jeeps and Barbie dolls, paradise for kids but a nightmare for all but the richest parents.

New Year is a curious mix of tradition and foreign practice

Russians live in flats so there is no nonsense about Father Frost coming down the chimney. The presents miraculously appear under the tree in the evening of 31 December, when families gather to drink out the old year with vodka. Just before midnight, President Boris Yeltsin appears on television with a short, benevolent speech. Then, after the Kremlin bells have sounded, the new year is drunk in with champagne.

In millions of Russian homes this festive season, children and adults will be opening their presents to find they have received just what they always wanted – a little furry bull. For 1997 is the Year of the Bull, according to the Chinese calendar, which Russians have also incorporated into their celebration.

Peking does not object to the theft of its tradition as most of the toy bulls on sale in Moscow have been imported from China.

Superstitious Russians believe that the nature of the year's animal determines the fate of humans for the next 12 months: 1996 was the Year of the Rat, an anarchic creature, and indeed in the last 12 months Russia has got into a mess, with unpaid taxes, wages and pensions, as politicians were first busy with the presidential elections and then the winner Mr Yeltsin fell ill and needed heart surgery.

By contrast, the bull is a beast that loves order, and politicians are promising that 1997 will be the year that Russia sorts itself out.

Helen Womack

international

The world was given a break from bloodshed in 1996. It cannot last

Few conflicts have spilled across borders in the past 12 months. Yet the seeds of cataclysm have been sown, says Christopher Bellamy

With North Korea's remarkable apology to South Korea over the incursion of one of its submarines into that country's waters, tension in one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints has been reduced, for the moment. Those countries constitute one of two such flashpoiots oo the Pacific rim, China and Taiwan heing the other.

The past year has seen no major conflict between states, and, as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute noted in its latest yearbook, all 30 major conflicts under way, from Afghanistan and Algeria to Tajikistan and Turkey, were primarily internal.

The distinction hetween inter-state and intra-state war is never simple, however; the confliet between Hutu and Tutsi which devastated Rwaoda and threateoed to devastate Burundi spilled over into Zaire, for example.

Internal conflicts generate floods of refugees, who spill over internatlooal horders, which is why the UN's Chapter VII, dealing with threats to international peace and security can be invoked to respond to internal unrest.

> 'In West Africa there is the withering away of government'

The world's armed forces are already responding to a shift in emphasis away from international to internal conflict. The British in Ireland, Indian and Pakistani forces in Kashmir, the Israeli army fighting the Palestinian intifada, and even the Russian army, all regard internal extremists as the more immediate threat. But they all have to maintain the ability to fight big wars, the "genie in the bottle", as well. It would be premature to suggest that international conflict has ended.

The past year may prove to be an aberration. And "internal" conflicts can be just as bad, and almost as destabilising as those between states. The conflict in Chechnya, which killed an estimated 50,000 people, is a case in point.

And as Kofi Annan, a former head of United Nations peace-keeping, takes charge as UN Secretary-General, he will want to identify where the next big conflict is likely to be – whether internal or international. So do the non-governmental organisations bringing aid to conflict areas. So do the general staffs of the major military powers, who may have to interveoe. So do the media.

The underlying causes of future conflict tend to preoccupy strategic thinkers more than immediate predictions of where it will he. Sam Huntington, a Harvard professor, recently formulated a theory that there would be a "clash of civilisations". Whereas the great wars of the iodustrial era had all been within western civilisation, now civilisations would collide like tectonic plates – Islam and Christendom, for example. So far, there has heen little evidence of such a collision: the causes of conflicts appear more local and trivial. Experts also agree that other big and inter-related factors – population growth, global warming and increased competition for vital resources, ootably water and oil – will influence future conflict.

This is not necessarily an academic *manie de grandiose*. More people will compete for fewer tesources in a changed, possibly more hostile environment. Flooded ot parched out of their homes, they will oeed somewhere to go.

Robert Kaplan, writing in 1994, took West Africa as his point of departure for a different analysis of what the wotld will look like. "Sierra Leooe," he wrote, "is a microcosm of what is occurring throughout West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering away of central government, the rise of tribal and tegional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war." He describes the young thugs he has encountered as a seething mass of "loose molecules" just waiting to ignite into violence, and a blurring of the distinetion between war, which by definition has some political objective, and crime.

The instability and conflict in central Africa – Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi – is likely to continue through the coming year. Uganda, the conduit for arms to Tutsi forces in Rwanda and Zaire, and Tanzania, where thousands of Hutu refugees are still sheltering, could also be drawn in to any conflict.

Western powers – the US, Canada, Britain France and Spain – were poised to send troops in but hreathed a sigh of relief when the Hutu refugees in Zaire hegan returning home and Hutu militia headed west, further into Zaire. While holding back from committing ground troops, the Western powers stepped up reconnaissance of the area. British plans for intervention in Zaire had already started life as plans for Burundi. We may yet see intervention in central Africa in 1997, especially if Zaire disintegrates.

Central Africa nearly hecame the British army's next war in October 1996, when a full brigade of 3,000 troops was put on stand-by. It may still be its next hig operation.

Most experts regard east Asia as the driest tinder to be ignited, however. North Korea, faeing increasing economic troubles, might try to divert attention by attacking the south; this year's hand-over of Hong Kong to China might go badly, leading to friction which could explode in violence by 2000; Taiwan may use China's preoccupation with Hoog Kong to provoke it again, as it did this year, leading to China conducting naval manoeuvres.

> 'Saudi Arabia is looking increasingly unstable'

With 31,000 stabilisatioo-force troops in place, Bosnia is unlikely to erupt in conflict again. Instead, Serbia itself may be the focus of renewed conflict in south-east Europe.

In the Taiwan dispute, the US fleet was a powerful instrument in deterring China from furthei action. There are strong grounds for believing that, like the colonial powers in the 18th and 19th centuries and the Allies in the two world wars, the international community is safer when its military efforts take place at sea.

Naval power could also be crucial in another flashpoint area – the Gulf. While Iraq remains under close scrutiny, and appears to be more compliant after the conclusion of the "oil for food" deal, Saudi Arabia itself is looking increasingly unstable. That is worrying for the West, still critically dependent on Gulf oil and oo Saudi money for billions of pounds' worth of defence exports.

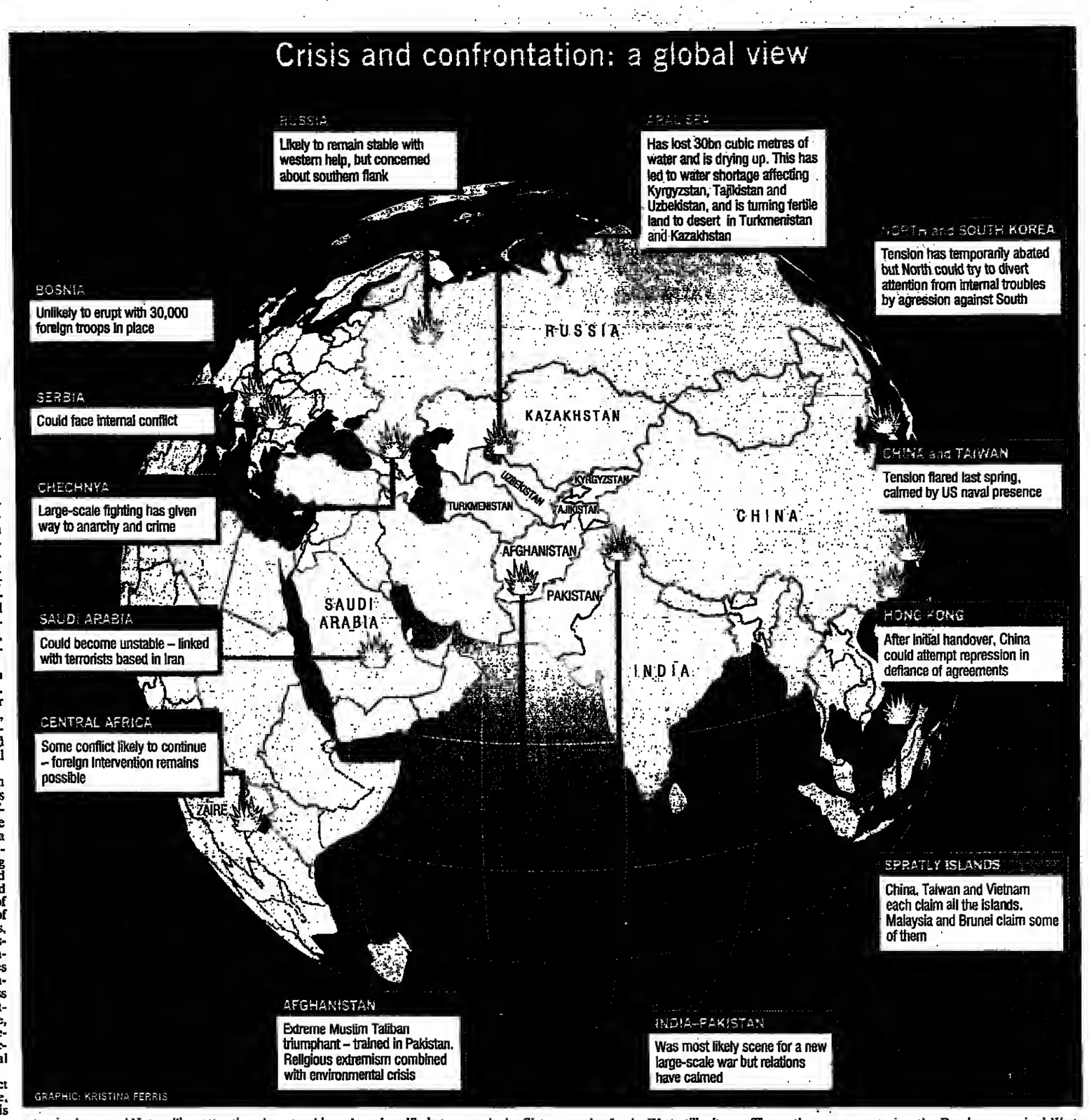
But the Gulf states and Iran enjoy easy access from the sea. That is why the last of the possible areas for major conflict could bring the realisation of the worst possible nightmare. All the factors – religious extremism, environmental degradation, disputes over oil and water, the break-up of old empires – converge in the Caucasus and central Asia and on the horder of the old Soviet Union. The position of Grozny at the junction of the key oil pipelines out of central Asia was one reason why the Russians were so determined to keep it.

The other way out is through Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. In this much fought-over area of the world the Aral Sea is drying up, fertile land is turning to desert, oil and water are resources to he fought over, and religious extremism – exemplified by the success of the Talehan in Afghanistan – is increasingly important.

> 'Religious extremism in the region is increasing'

In recent discussions between Nato and the Russians, the Russians surprised Western observers by asking for help to deal with security threats to the south. The chairman of Nato's Military Committee, Klaus Naumann, said he had discussed eo-operating with Russia to preserve seeurity in the area. And when Michael Portillo, Britain's Secretary of State for Defence, visited Moscow in November, one of the Russian admirals in his audience asked for Western financial help.

An explosion in the world's heartland, far from the sea, would be very difficult for the international community to handle. And hecause it is relatively difficult to get to, it may not attract massive media attention in time to persuade governments to try to stop it.



THE PHILISTINES WHO THREATEN AYCKBOURN'S THEATRE Page 15

Margaret Herbison

When my parliamentary neighbour Peggy Herbison (she was never Margaret to her family, colleagues, friends and ex-pupils) was a teacher during the Second World War at Allan Glen's School in Glasgow, she had occasion to ask her 13-year-olds' class: "Put up your hands, those of you who have never been to Edinburgh." Two hands crept up. She had already arranged to take an orphan boy, and invited the pupils who had never been to accompany her. They went for a splendid tea and lovely concert, at her expense.

To this day, one of them, now a pensioner constituent of mine, recalls the altruistic kindness of this diminutive but formidable teacher with that deep, clarion bell-like voice that would quell a rumbustious class, as it was later to quell a rumbustious House of Commons or the rumbustious Labour Party Conference at Brighton in 1957 which Herbison chaired. Offered a place in the House of Lords by Harold Wilson, she declined on the grounds that she could do more good back in Lanarkshire among "my own people" – possibly her favourite phrase. As in all matters, in this Herbison was totally sincere.

Born in the now pink-harled, if modestly extended, miner's house which was her home for over eight decades, she had a happy childhood. "Mother was a McCrorie from Northern Ireland – in fact from Paisley's Bannside. My father, a gentle and tolerant man, was shocked when after visiting cousins there I brought home some Orange songs. But I'd also learnt some Irish rebel songs." She went to Dykehead Public School in Shotts, a few hundred yards down the road.

The strict traditional dominies of Bellshill Academy saw to it that the miner's daughter went to Glasgow University. Telling me in 1994 how pleased she was that another woman, Marion Fraser, wife of the then principal of Glasgow University, had succeeded her as Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland a quarter of a century later, she recollected her university experience. "In those days, the University of Glasgow inculcated into us that they expected us to pay back the country for the privileged education we had had in terms of service to society." It was for service to society that the university was to bestow on Herbison an Honorary Doctorate of Laws, which gave her far more pleasure than senior ministerial office.

During the war she took tough pupils from Maryhill Primary School and later Allan Glen's School on many visits to supplement their understanding of her subjects, history and English. Her pupils recollect with that mixture of affection and awe which betokens a really successful professional teacher her easy authority. One boy, later to achieve fame in the boxing ring, described her in those days as a "right proper bantamweight" – which her parliamentary friends of later years who straddled the parties could easily imagine. In wartime she would take busloads of Glasgow schoolboys for fresh air and to help bring in the harvest at Kintore in the north-east of Scotland.

Herbison had never thought of being a Member of Parliament until the local miners of her father's lodge, without his prompting, asked her to be a candidate. She at first refused, saying sincerely that she preferred going on with her voluntary work for the Labour Party and for the National Council of Labour Colleges. On 17 October 1945 she rose to make her maiden speech:

> In my constituency of North Lanark, where I am faced with a gigantic housing problem, we have suffered little or nothing from war damage. During the recess I thought I would try making a survey of our housing conditions. Living in one of the biggest mining villages in the constituency, I knew beforehand that our housing conditions were very bad, but it was not until I made the survey that I found that those conditions were as dreadful as they could possibly be.
>
> My people for a long time have been suffering deplorable conditions. That cannot be put on this Labour government; it is the result of governments not tackling this problem as it ought to have been tackled a long time ago. In Shotts, we have people who have been living in a room in somebody else's house for 14 years – living, eating, sleeping, bearing and rearing children in one room that is not even their own. In many parts of my constituency there are people living in houses in which the Minister of Health or the Minister of Agriculture would not allow cattle to live. They would say, "You must now house your cattle in them: if you do, we won't be willing to accept the milk for the children." Yet, our children and their parents have to live in them.

Herbison's time in Parliament during the Attlee government was devoted to pressing the cause of those who were suffering in rotten conditions. She was rewarded in 1950 with the position of Joint Under-Secretary of State for Scotland. She was able in the short time that remained for the Government to carry out her maiden speech suggestion relating to prefabricated houses:

> I say to the Government that if prefabricated houses will solve the problem more quickly then get on with prefabricated houses. I say that because I feel that if this Government tackles the problem of housing by giving us in the first place prefabricated houses, those temporary houses will not become permanent but will be replaced when they are no longer of use.

In the turmoil of the Labour Party's 13 years out of office Herbison proved herself on the National Executive of the Party and in Parliament as a Hugh Gaitskell loyalist. She presided over the infamous 1957 conference at the Brighton Ice Rink – infamous because the ice was not properly insulated and many a delegate had not only cold feet but went home with pneumonia. "You spoke about the cool breezes. I am a Scotswoman and I laugh at cool breezes. I must say to the delegates, though, I am a little afraid that we might have too cool breezes coming from the floor of this conference."

When Labour was returned to power Herbison was made Minister of Pensions and National Insurance, but outside the Cabinet. She was uneasily responsible to Douglas Houghton, the co-ordinator of the Social Services inside the Cabinet. In proposing the first major measure of the incoming government, the National Insurance Bill, she said that in examining ways of getting help to those who need it in the quickest way possible she had, with very great reluctance, to adopt the traditional method. But she promised provisions for an income guarantee for retired people and widows. Alas, the Government got into great economic difficulty and was unable to meet the promises to which Herbison thought that they were committed.

In July 1967 she resigned, and yet refused to go beyond the formal letter of resignation to Harold Wilson in which he spoke of strong opposition "to the decision taken on family endowment and on certain aspects of the future programme of my department". The truth was that Herbison, while loyally refusing to embarrass other ministers, saw that the fight to save sterling would mean curbs on the Welfare State. Her conscience would not allow her to be the instrument of the new crisis policies, and without recriminations against other ministers whose consciences could make the adjustment she made an honourable exit from office.

The miner's daughter: Herbison canvassing in Kingshill Colliery No 1, 1950 Photograph: Hulton Getty

The Labour Party in Scotland was outraged that her place should be taken by the MP for South Lanark, her parliamentary neighbour Mrs Judith Hart, a celebrated left-winger. At the end of her parliamentary career Herbison served with distinction as chairman of the Select Committee on Overseas Aid.

The dignity of Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly goes back to 1580. Herbison's appearance was the first occasion in its hallowed history that a woman has represented the sovereign on such a great occasion. As an elder stateswoman Herbison was well-equipped for the social duties it demanded. The position is ceremonial and symbolic, but it is all the better when it is filled by a person whose public service, character and devotion to the Church enable them to address the Assembly with conviction.

I asked Herbison shortly before she died what she thought her greatest political achievement had been. The answer had nothing to do with her long period as a national figure. She wanted to be remembered for the work she had done in bringing new industries into an area to replace the dwindling mining industry. It was partly due to her efforts that there is now a mixture of new industries in the Lanarkshire coal field. Diesel engines (Cummins) in Shotts, toy factories, precision parts for engineering and a great many other factories are a legacy of her work over a quarter of a century. Her last political act was to arrange with her agent, the late Councillor Dick Stewart, famous as Convenor of Strathclyde region, that her beloved North Lanark constituency should have the best potential politician on the Labour Party horizon as her successor. They fixed it – the young man's name was John Smith.

Tam Dalyell

Margaret McCrorie Herbison, teacher and politician: born Shotts, Lanarkshire 11 March 1907; MP (Labour) for North Lanark 1945-70; Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office 1950-51; Minister of Pensions and National Insurance 1964-66; Minister of Social Security 1966-67; Chairman of the Select Committee on Overseas Aid 1969-70; Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly to the Church of Scotland 1970-71; died Lanark 29 December 1996.

Mireille

In France, Sunday's television news channels were all devoted to the death of the beloved singer, composer, actress and teacher Mireille, something that has not happened since the deaths of Yves Montand and Léo Ferré. She was the inventor of the modern French popular song, the rejuvenator of the chanson. She was *petite* (4ft 10in), chic and even in old age this nimble nonagenarian seemed unextinguishable. Her passing has been greeted in France as a national disaster.

Mireille (as she was always known) was the daughter of Hendel Hartuch, a Polish furrier, and Mathilde Rubinstein, who was British. They were both excellent musicians. They put Mireille to the piano at the age of two. She dreamed of being a great pianist, like her teacher at the Conservatoire, Marguerite Long. But she *couldn't* reach the pedals and her tiny hands could not span an octave so she turned to the theatre. She was engaged by Firmin Grémier at the Odéon to play *travesti* rôles like Cherubin in Beaumarchais' *Le Mariage de Figaro* and Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, then graduated to soubrettes and marquises, playing Lisette in *Le Double Inconstance de Figaro*. Her uncle was Charlie Kunz, "King of Tap", and she became a good *claquette* dancer.

But then her whole life changed when Claude Dauphin introduced her to Jean Nohain, a young lawyer who between briefs wrote lyrics and stories. He became her accredited *parolier* (lyricist) for the unique new songs she began writing with him – light, witty, tender, with a tonic touch of the bizarre. As Nohain later recalled: "We were young and gay, we composed young, gay chansons just for our own enjoyment, without any hope of commercial success." Indeed their first large work, an American-style operetta, *Fouchtra*, was rejected by all the managements. (It lasted five hours and the score weighed a dozen kilos.)

But Mireille had discovered

Mireille: indomitable

a fresh vein of humour and melody in her jaunty, impertinent little jingles, and they were to transform the history of chanson, still at that time glued in the syrupy though appealing emotion of conventional love lyrics and religioso tunes sung by great stars like Fréhel, Damia and Berthe Sylva, reigning queens of cabaret and music hall.

Mireille's career took another surprising turn when she went to London. Some of her songs were adopted by Layton and Johnson. But it was Noël Coward who noticed her special quality, and engaged her to play the French soubrette Crevette in his production of *Bitter Sweet* (misprinted in French guides as "Better Sweat") at the Ziegfield Theatre in New York.

She made a trip to Hollywood, where she wrote music for a Grace Moore movie, now forgotten, and joined Buster Keaton in one of his acrobatic shorts. She also appeared in *The Trial of Mary Dugan* (1929) with Charles Boyer. While in Hollywood she received a cable demanding her return to Paris, where one of the songs in *Fouchtra* had become a big hit. It was the immortal "*Couchés dans le foin*" ("Cuddling in the Hay"). Mireille recorded it with the original duo Pills et Tabet and Jean Sablon, who then, in 1931, was just starting on an illustrious career as a "Latin Lover"-type chanson singer.

Mireille and Jean Nohain went on to compose, in a great rush of renewed creativity, some of their most enduring numbers, of which "*Le Petit Chemin*" was her own favourite. Others were taken up by Yves Montand ("*Une demoiselle sur une balançoire*": "Young Lady on a Swing"), "*La Carosse*" (in duo with Mireille), Charles Trenet ("*Le Vieux Château*"), Georges Brassens ("*Quand le Vicomte*", also in duo with Mireille) and Jacques Brel ("*Le Petit Chemin*"). Mireille had become a star in her own right, appearing at all the Paris cabarets and music halls. Perched behind her white grand piano (her trademark), she would sing in a puckish manner, the child-like sweetness of her voice with a refreshingly astringent acid lemon-drop tang. She did not have great volume. She would sometimes joke: "I haven't lost my voice – I never had one." But without apparent effort every syllable she uttered could be heard (without a mike) in every corner of the house, where audiences were mesmerised into stillness by her fey apparition. As her friend Sacha Guitry quipped: "Mireille does not labour under the disadvantages of a big voice. You have to pay attention in order to hear her, which on the stage is proof of infinite tact."

In 1937, she had married the fine philosopher and writer Emmanuel Berl, and their love affair lasted 40 years, mainly perhaps because they had separate rooms and observed a system of "Stop/Go" red and green lights on the connecting door.

In 1955, her husband and his friends Sasha Guitry, Cocteau and Malraux persuaded Mireille to open her celebrated Petit Conservatoire for the training of young chanson and music-hall artists. It was an immense success, and is still turning out new stars. At first it was broadcast live on radio, then on television, and Mireille and her severe authority became the talk of the nation.

She was no dainty Dresden shepherdess, but a tough trouper in smartly cut blue jeans (that she wore to the end of her life). She awed her young hopefuls: but they adulated as well as feared her. Some of her students are stars today – Françoise Hardy, Julien Clerc, Serge Lama, Sapho and Michel Berger, composer of the rock opera *Starmania*, running permanently in Paris. When Emmanuel died in 1976, she almost gave up. But the lady was indomitable, and she continued teaching as well as returning to the stage. In 1980, she celebrated her 50 years of song (600 numbers) at the SACEM – the French equivalent of our Performing Right Society.

I attended the first night of her great recital at the Théâtre National du Palais de Chaillot. She was 88, and I hardly knew what to expect. The lights went down, the stage revolved, bringing on a pink and gold couch on which was perched, with a very straight back, our darling Mireille. She rose, bowed and advanced with sprightly little steps to her white grand piano, on which stood Emmanuel's silver-framed photograph. She was wearing a superb creation by Christian Lacroix, a voluminous *princesse* gown of tender blue silk with an almost endless train, a huge bow, flying ribbons and nun-like touches of pale azure in the cuffs and embroidered lapels. She had a standing ovation even before she sat down at the piano. It was a magical evening, with the audience singing along – from time to time she would wag an arch little finger at us and gently admonish us for singing too loudly or not observing the correct tempo. It was like a lesson at the Petit Conservatoire, and at the end we were all shouting for more, and in tears as she left the stage after a succession of recalls and encores.

She was *si petite* but *si grande dame*!

James Kirkup

Mireille Hartuch, singer, composer, actress and teacher: born Paris 30 September 1906; married 1937 Emmanuel Berl (died 1976); died Paris 29 December 1996.

Michael Charnley

At the beginning of his career Michael Charnley displayed a talent that heralded a successful future in British ballet, especially towards the lighter, popular end. He choreographed a number of pieces for Ballet Rambert and the Festival Ballet (now the English National Ballet). In 1954 his two-act version of *Alice in Wonderland* for Festival Ballet was broadcast on television by the BBC. He often worked in television, films and musicals. But in the 1960s, his activities dwindled, through ill-health and, reputedly, alcoholism.

The wayward style of his life started early. Growing up in Salford he hated school because he was bullied, while at home he was criticised for lacking seriousness. At 14 he ran away to the Isles of Scilly and became a tea-boy and bottle-washer. This dubious novelty quickly palled and he travelled to London where he found jobs as a theatre call boy and as a bell boy at the Savoy and Waldorf Hotels, from where he would go and see the opera and ballet at Covent Garden.

Charnley's involvement with theatre found firmer direction when an astrologer predicted he would become a dancer and showed him a photograph of Kurt Jooss's dance company, then based in Dartington, in Devon. Charnley wrote to Jooss and was given a short scholarship. He was then offered free tuition by Ninette de Valois who, after three months, in 1941, invited him to join her company, the Sadler's Wells Ballet. He lasted there nearly a year, but hankering for freer, broader terrain he briefly danced with other companies before returning to the Ballets Jooss in 1944. Through Jooss he decided to try choreography. He admired the modern dance of Jooss and Martha Graham and tried to expand the narrow frame of classical ballet. His work had a strong rhythmic sense and a cheeky, down-to-earth quality that was refreshing.

After three years he went to the United States where he appeared in Hollywood films, television shows (performing his own choreography) and a musical, *Inside USA*. It also gave him the opportunity to study with Martha Graham and Hanya Holm.

Back in Europe, in 1951 he choreographed three ballets for Ballet Workshop. One, a quartet called *Banalelle*, was distinctive for the way the women danced on half point. In 1952 he created *Movimientos* (again for Ballet Workshop), its idiom mirroring the South American flavour of Michael Hobson's music. Marie Rambert liked it so much she took it into her company's repertory.

The freshness of *Movimientos* also impressed the Festival Ballet's director, Anton Dolin. Three months later Charnley created the plotless and exhilarating *Symphony for Fun* for Festival Ballet, which they performed until 1962. He also created his two-act *Alice in Wonderland* for them in 1953 with Belinda Wright as Alice, John Gilpin as the White Rabbit and Dolin as the narrator.

During the next years he worked in films, operettas and revues. He directed *For Adults Only* at the Strand Theatre in which one dance number was "*Scènes de Ballet*", a spoof about the ballerina Moira Shearer and her husband Ludovic Kennedy, who was then standing for Parliament. In 1964 he moved to Australia, again working in television and film. Returning to Britain five years later he dropped largely from view, although he did occasionally teach.

Nadine Meisner

Michael Charnley, dancer and choreographer: born Stockport 24 August 1922; married Valentina Belova; died London 19 November 1996.

Charnley: wayward
Photograph: Jennie Walton

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

BENSON: Edmund John, on 27 December 1996, aged 81 years. Funeral Service on Friday 3 January 1997, at 1pm, Holy Cross Priory, Lewes Road, Cross-in-Hand, near Heathfield, East Sussex.

CORNFORD: Katharine. Peacefully, on 26 December, aged 96. Widow of Lawrence, mother of Ann. Funeral at Aldworth Church, Berkshire, on Saturday 4 January at 2pm. Family flowers, donations if desired to St Paul's Girls School Scholarship Fund or SPANA.

DARE: Dr Christine Mary, of Cape Town, on 29 December 1996, at her sister's house in Lymington, after a long illness, aged 61. Sister of David and Rachel, aunt of Mark, James, Lucy, Jenny and Annie. Private family funeral. Thanksgiving services will be held in London and Cape Town in January on dates to be announced.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, telephone 0171-293 2011.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am 7 Company Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Grenadier Guards.

Birthdays

Mr Douglas Anthony, former Deputy Prime Minister in Australia, 67; Mr Edward Glanvill Benn, life president, Benn Bros, 91; Mr Phil Blakeway, rugby player, 46; Sir George Blunden, former deputy Governor, Bank of England, 74; Mr Michael Bonallack, secretary, Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, 62; Sir George Christie, chairman, Glyndebourne Productions Ltd, 62; Mr Stephen Cleobury, organist, Cambridge University, 48; Mr John Denver, folk singer, 53; Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn, 84; Sir Anthony Hopkins, actor, 59; Mr Ben Kingsley, actor, 53; Mr Brian McGratten, rugby player, 37; Mr Eric Mackay, former Editor of the *Scotsman*, 74; Miss Sarah Miles, actress, 53; Dr Valerie Pearl, former President, New Hall, Cambridge, 70; M Jean-Pierre Rives, rugby captain, 44; Sir Joshua Rowley Bt, former Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, 76; Sir John Sainty, former Clerk of the Parliaments, 62; Mr Alexander Salmond MP, 42; The Right Rev Timothy Stevens, Bishop of Dunwich, 50; Miss Donna Summer, singer, 48; Mr Hugh Timnell, former ambassador to Bahrain, 61; Sir David Walker, chairman, Morgan Stanley Group, 57.

Anniversaries

Births: Jacques Cartier, explorer and navigator, 1494; Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, 1720; Charles, Marquess Cornwallis, statesman and soldier, 1738; Sir Edward Augustus Bond, librarian of the British Museum, 1815; Ismail Pasha, Khedive of Egypt, 1830; Henri-Emile Benoît Matisse, painter, 1869; Caradoc Evans, novelist, 1878; Jule Styne (Julius Kerwin Stein), songwriter and composer, 1905. **Deaths:** Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II, 1705; John Flamsteed, first Astronomer Royal, 1719; Sir Frank Robert Benson, actor-manager, 1939; Sir Malcolm Campbell, speedster on land and water, 1948. **On this day:** the Honourable East India Company was chartered by Queen Elizabeth I, 1600; a window tax was imposed in England, 1695; Ottawa was chosen by Queen Victoria as the capital of Canada, 1857; the Lyceum Theatre's present building opened, 1904; the chimes of Big Ben were broadcast for the first time, 1923; the British Army abandoned the use of the lance, except for ceremonial use, 1927; the farthing ceased to be legal currency, 1960. Today is Hogmanay in Scotland and the Feast Day of St Columba of Sens, St John-Francis Regis, St Melania the Younger and St Silvester I, pope.

Lectures

British Museum: George Hart, "Treasures from the Tomb of Tutankhamun", 1.15pm.

The future as well as the past belongs to God

Meanings of Christmas

God came as a child, in humility, affirms the Bishop of London, the Right Rev Richard Chartres; and in that humility lies promise for us all.

I have just seen a fearful sight in a supermarket. There was a heavily laden shopping trolley. More and more had been piled on to it until it looked like one of Europe's minor food mountains. Then in trying, rather fast, to negotiate the check-out, it toppled over. Other shoppers were angry and the trolley driver was in tears.

In the run-up to Christmas there is always excitement but also tension. The heavens are full of advertising jingles, glad tidings of new angles on the present problem. Even the churches are being tempted to compete and to join the deafening chorus marketing Christmas.

The festive season stirs up strong feelings for good or ill. This has always been so. In 1652, Parliament was presented with a "terrible remonstrance against Christmas Day". This persuaded the House of Commons to order the abolition of the festival and to resolve to meet on Christmas Day itself.

But we are allowing ourselves a brief lull to listen to the story of the Virgin Mary, arriving in Bethlehem "great with child". She has, as the poet says, "immensity cloister'd in thy dear womb". God comes as a little baby, born of a Virgin who lays him in a manger. God speaks not even in a still, small voice but in the cry of a small child.

God speaks to us from the earth in great humility, as a vulnerable child. Humility can disarm and melt the toughest customer. "The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless" (T.S. Eliot). Humility is close to the earth and causes no fear which imprisons the soul. He could have come as one of those saviours on a white horse who promise much but who leave disillusionment in their wake.

The airwaves are full of manifestos and uplifting rhetoric. Hope on Christmas Day comes with a birth in a stable. God's Word is embodied without eloquence or a multitude of words.

The glad tidings are of the birth of a child who invites and draws shepherds and wise men alike to his side. The world is not short of ideas and notions and clever packages addressed to its problems. But the most profound problem is the shortage of the will to change and the love that gives life to others by self-sacrifice.

This love which gives life does not come by exhortation. It is enkindled within us as we are drawn into communion with others in the Spirit of God who reaches out to us and draws us to Himself in the Christ Child.

As we kneel simply by the manger, the infant Jesus can touch and inflame that thirst for love and loving which God has implanted in us. The son of God strengthens our capacity to see others as beloved fellow children of God. We see life through his eyes rather than seeing others as strangers, objects or statistics.

In St Luke's account of the birth, it appears that Jesus was born away from his home town because Roman-occupied Palestine was in the midst of a great statistical survey; a decree having gone out from Caesar Augustus, the regulatory authority of the time, that "all the world should be taxed".

God came small and humble. He came as a child full of promise for the future which God intends. Just as the shepherds that first Christmas were "sore afraid" so today many people are troubled by the fear of what is coming to the world. So much that is familiar seems to be passing away.

No more than anyone else can I see into the future. But I am convinced that the future as well as the past belongs to God and that anyone who contemplates the birth of Jesus Christ and keeps all those things and ponders them in their heart, as Mary did, will know the joy of the angels' song – "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

Still on track – or about to shunt into the sidings?

Irvine Welsh's 'Trainspotting' became a literary and box-office phenomenon this year. Boyd Tonkin asks what next for the unpredictable poet of the E generation

ANNUS MIRABILIS

Forget the Holy Grail. An even scarcer prize has eluded most of the British press in the three years since *Trainspotting* flung its author from Edinburgh's artistic underground into the upper atmosphere of cult celebrity. This is the Article by Irvine Welsh. The story goes that a respected editor thought that he had snared one this summer: a match report from the Euro '96 soccer tournament. Then he learnt that Welsh's cooditions included the full payment of bar bills – for him and all his guests. Apocryphal or not, the idea of Scotland's lord of literary misrule playing a canny cat-and-mouse game with the mainstream media that have so clumsily lionised him does ring very true.

This year, Danny Boyle's hyperactive version of *Trainspotting* became the sole British movie to stand up at the box office against Hollywood's dumb-and-dumber blockbusters. The Welsh multimedia enterprise – the book, the play, the film, the poster, the CD – has now produced the cash to match its dash. At the same time, the writer himself shows signs of getting stuck in his own groove.

Some adverse reactions to *Ecstasy*, a triptych of oew oovellas, hinted that the loog delirium induced by his drug-and-dance riffs may have begun to wane, at least in print. Yet, as he cranks out a book a year and ventures out from his canalside warehouse flat in Amsterdam to Europe's finest raves, Welsh refuses to agonise over his next step. Not least among his breaches of convention is this blithe indifference to the normal pathway of a literary career.

From House to trance, the music that pulsates behind his prose is marked by what the anti-rave clause of the Criminal Justice Act calls "a repetitive series of beats". You might say the same about his work. *Ecstasy*, with its blazing paeans to the rising generation's stimulants of choice, spun all his favourite tunes one more time. Macho violence and self-hatred wrestled with a "dazzling glimpse" of shared clubland bliss and personal deliverance. In a review, the Scottish writer and musician Pat Kane professed himself "still saddened (or at least perplexed) by the proximity of individual sadism and collective joy in Welsh's work". Yet the man himself bothers no more about textbook notions of writerly development than the music he loves does about harmonic progression. The sheer exhilaration of the rush – in Welsh's case, his comic but affecting blend of profane "Embra" street talk and subtle literary English – makes up for a murky sense of direction. How long can the high last, for the author and his legion of fans?

His year's work shows that Welsh still keeps to roughly the same tracks laid down in *Trainspotting*. The drugs may change; the milieu stays much the same. As well as *Ecstasy*, he contributed to *Children of Albion Rovers*, the bestselling anthology of new-wave Scottish authors compiled by his first editor, Kevin Williamson. Early next year, he will publish a story in *Disco Biscuits*, a collectioo that marks the decade since House beats first arrived on these shores from the clubs of Ibiza. "The State of the Party" scrambles bad trips, rough sex and ultra-violence among the Edinburgh "schemes" into a familiar cocktail. As usual, the wrecked loser at its heart blames his paranoia on "the residue of the acid ... just the comedown". Welsh's fictioo always hints that an explanation for its characters' misery lies just beyond their chemically modified horizons. The big picture – a radical analysis that takes in masculinity and gender politics, Scottish nationalism, class conflict and economic change – always hovers just behind their blurry vision. In this new story, one of the bad lads brags about his sexual prowess and crows that "Nae amount ay drugs kin knock this boy oot ay his stride. That's whit sorts out the highly-skilled time-served men fae the also-rans". That poignant allusion to "highly-skilled time-served men" gives the speech a true Welsh touch – an echo of the secure industrial jobs that these kids' fathers held down, but that they oever will. Yet the burgeoning Welsh cult fostered by the film seems to bave stopped this broader view from ever coming into proper focus.

Welsh: cares no more about writerly development than the music he loves does about harmonic progression

It's possible that Welsh will tire of his own myth and bow out of fictioo for a while. With his surprisingly "straight" background in housing management and business studies, and his commitment to the cosmopolitan rave scene, he might even be keeping some great eotrepreneurial coup up his sleeve. Irvine Welsh as a supercool equivalent of London clubland baroo Peter Stringfellow, for example? Stranger things have happened.

Yet we shouldn't underestimate just what he has achieved in three brief years. After decades of death-of-the book punditry, the widest postwar youth movement – bigger than the hippies, bigger than punk – found its voice in a writer of startling verbal gifts. A real writer: not a DJ, not a designer, not a singer and definitely not a TV personality. A couple of years ago, it was immensely heartening to see *Trainspotting* stacked up by the till like Mars bars in every sweet shop across lowland Scotland, and selling just as fast. If today's dance culture really was spiralling down into an abyss of subliteracy, it would hardly seize on such an artful dodger as its mascot.

In *Marabou Stork Nightmares* – a novel of even more controlled ferocity than *Trainspotting* – the harmed and harmful hero admits that he's spent his life "running away from sensitivity, from feelings, from love. Running away because a fuckin schemie, a nobody, shouldnae have these feelings because there's fuckin naewhair for them tae go". For an army of readers with no time or taste for the sacred monuments of modern writing, Welsh has given their joy and fear somewhere positive tae go. The question that 1997 holds is whether Welsh the writer – as opposed to the brand-name and businessman – has anywhere fresh tae go himself.

How many doctors wash their thermometers between patients? What is 'bleep roulette'? Why do doctors drink? What is six times more likely to happen in Glasgow? Yes, it's your end-of-year quiz, and no prizes for guessing the answers

Phil Hammond

MA, MB, BChir, MRCGP, DGM*

Q: Who holds the UK record for impersonating a doctor?
A: Muhammed Saeed of Bradford, who impersonated a GP for 30 years before he was caught – and he was one of the good ones.

Q: What did he allegedly prescribe for a sore throat and conjunctivitis?
A: Creosote and shampoo

Q: What happens to the death rate when junior doctors go on strike?
A: It goes down

Q: What did Cornish nurse Valerie Tomlinson do that she shouldn't have?
A: Whip out an appendix

Q: What did managers at Hartlepool and Peterloo NHS trust do to entice an American anaesthetist to work for them?
A: They paid £1,700 to transport Fritz, his Rottweiler, over with him. Both returned, homesick, after a few months.

Q: Who definitely wasn't Dr Dolittle?
A: Anthony Percy, a consultant orthopaedic surgeon from Sidcup, awarded £625,000 in damages from the *Daily Mirror* which called him Dr Dolittle for not coming into hospital to help his junior staff find an intensive-care bed.

Q: Which cough remedies upset nurses in 1996?
A: Night Nurse and Day Nurse – they appeared in *Chemist and Druggist* [illegible] under the headline "[illegible] hard during the day, [illegible] in bed." The Advertising [illegible] Standards Authority said it was a harmless play on words.

Q: What is bleep roulette?
A: A game that junior doctors are alleged to play when they're bored. They sit round a table, put all their bleeps in the middle and pick one out at random – so the psychiatrist has to be a surgeon for the evening and vice versa.

Q: Why do doctors grab your bollocks and ask you to cough?
A: Because it's fun. And to see if you've got a hernia.

Q: Who said 'Going into the media has been glamorous and stimulating, but it's not as easy as it looks'?
A: GMTV's Dr Hilary Jones

Q: True or false? In 1996, a GP removed a 75-year-old woman from his list, telling her 'I am unable to tolerate the environment in your home'.
A: True. Dr Ian Farmer removed a Mrs Pratt because he was allergic to her cigarette smoke.

Q: What percentage of Dutch ear, nose and throat surgeons admit to having had sexual contact with a patient?
A: 10 per cent

Q: Which is safer: a) taking your gall bladder out by hacking a great hole in the abdomen; or b) whipping it out through a tiny keyhole incision?
A: Depends who's doing it. Overall, the big hole is marginally safer.

Q: How many years earlier do the poorest women in the UK die compared with the richest?
A: Seven

Q: What are you six times more likely to have done in Glasgow than in Dundee?
A: Your womb scraped

Q: What percentage of operations carried out in the UK are unnecessary?
A: 20 per cent

Q: What time of the week is your GP most likely to prescribe antibiotics?
A: Friday evening

Q: True or false? You're more likely to leave hospital with an infection than enter with one.
A: True

Q: What percentage of doctors wash their thermometers in between patients?
A: 15 per cent. And that goes for oral and rectal (I use the same one).

Q: In 1995, who sewed up a patient in a Bradford casualty department by mistake?
A: A 17-year-old student.

Q: What percentage of hospital managers would not join the NHS today?
A: [illegible] they all s[illegible]

Q: What are the Government's new safe-drinking limits?
A: 28 units a week for men, 21 for women. Doctors prefer 21 and 14.

Q: How many people know what the Government's safe limits are?
A: Fewer than 5 per cent

Q: How many doctors, according to the BMA, are addicted to alcohol or drugs?
A: 13,000

Q: Why do doctors drink?
A: To give them something to do while they're smoking. Boom, boom.

Q: How much a year do people who don't turn up to their outpatient appointments cost the NHS?
A: £266 million

Q: If you're under 60 years old, do you save the NHS money by exercising?
A: No – you cost more because of injuries.

Q: What is the average wait for an emergency bed in London?
A: Seveo hours

Q: What percentage of casualty departments are still putting up patients on trolleys overnight?
A: 50 per cent

Q: The 1996 'Good Housekeeping' Woman of the Year is a doctor. What was she before that?
A: A nurse

Q: Who said 'The doctors and the medical profession are the priesthood and they regard themselves as a priesthood'?
A: Nigel Lawson

Q: Who made a disastrous party political broadcast about a girl with glue ear whose mother was a Tory candidate?
A: The Labour Party

Q: Who claimed that the idea for GP fundholding came while 'holidaying on a promontory in Galicia'?
A: Kenneth Clarke – and doesn't it show

Q: Who said 'William – you need a large whisky'?
A: Thatcher to Waldegrave, when he became health minister

Q: How many of the Government's 27 'Health of the Nation' targets were met in 1996?
A: 11

Q: What were the biggest flops?
A: Obesity, smoking and alcohol

Q: Which area in England has most GPs per head?
A: Harrow

Q: Which has least?
A: Rotherham, Sunderland and Barnsley

Q: How many GPs would have to move to the North to even up the distribution?
A: 700

Q: How many of the symptoms a GP sees would get better if left to nature?
A: 80 per cent

Q: What percentage of NHS staff experienced violence at work last year?
A: 40 per cent

Q: Who said 'Let me make one thing absolutely clear. The National Health Service is safe with us'?
A: Thatcher

Q: Who said 'Maybe the Labour Party was telling the truth after all. Perhaps the NHS is unsafe in the Tories' hands'?
A: The *Daily Express*

Q: Where is Dr Phil spending New Year's Eve?
a) The casualty department of City Hospital, Birmingham
b) At home with the wife and kids
c) Trafalgar Square

A: See Channel 4 for details

** This column was previously labelled 'Phil Hammond MD'. A solicitor's reader points out that Dr Hammond is not, in fact, entitled to attach these letters to his name; these, then, are his real qualifications.*

There was a carpet of jonquils as far as you could see

The time: May 1986

The place: the Aubrac, France

The man: John Eliot Gardiner, conductor

revelations

'There is an area in France that in the last few years has meant a lot to me, because I never realised such an area could still exist, I thought it would have disappeared centuries ago. It is an area called the Aubrac, a plateau about 3,000ft high, up in the Auvergne, and about the oearest thing to ancient Gaul that I can imagine.

I happened across it in this way: for six years I was music director of the Opéra in Lyon, and in May 1986 I was having dinner with a composer friend called Jean-Guy Bailly and his wife. They rent a gite in the Aubrac and were enthusing about the region: the landscape, the people, the food. I got so caught up in their enthusiasm, I decided then and there to see it for myself.

I drove southwest towards Le Puy and up into the Auvergne. I'd known other parts of the regioo before, the Rouergue, the Dordogne and the Gorges du Tarn, but this came as a complete surprise. I arrived at the edge of the Aubrac plateau, found somewhere to stay for the night and apart from the fact that the locals spoke this strange patois, the first thing that struck me was how incredibly untouched it all was by the 20th century. Starting oot early next morning, I walked from one end of the plateau to the other. Spring had only just arrived and the jooquils were out everywhere: there was a carpet of these miniature daffodils as far as the eye could see. As I climbed above the treeline, the tundra-like landscape reminded me of the Scottish Highlands – Wester Ross perhaps, or parts of the Yorkshire Moors.

Most striking of all were the cattle grazing everywhere. Aubrac cattle are fawn-coloured, with big black eyes and long lashes, rather like a Jersey, only much chunkier and, with their magnificent horns, much more haughty.

I have always had an eothusiasm and professional involvement in both music and agriculture, particularly agriculture based on bio-dynamic and organic methods, so I instantly sensed a kinship with the area and the farmers' way of looking after their livestock. In the winter months they keep their cattle in byres and feed them on hay, aod only hay. After they have calved in the new year, in April comes the *transhumance*, the annual procession from the valley floor on to the opeo plateau. The cattle's horns are decorated with garlands and tricolours and the cows, with their calves at foot, are guided by drovers, well-wishers and their families.

The Aubrac plateau itself is hilly and very underpopulated – just a few villages, all of granite stone and almost totally unspoilt. From the very first weekeod I speoi walking across the plateau, I sensed the agelessness of the place: pre-Roman, almost pre-Neolithic in feeling and, as I say, almost totally untouched by modern society. I saw only three cars in the whole day, which brought home to me that this is one of the few remaining areas of near-wilderoess left in Western Europe in terms of flora, fauna and its whole eco-system.

The food is superb, as you would expect. There is a butcher in Aumont who displays typical Charolais and Aubrac cuts side by side in his shop. The Charolais, which is definitely the most popular imported French breed in Britain and what you are generally offered at most supermarket meat counters, is, in comparison with the Aubrac, usually rather tough and tasteless. A good Aubrac steak, with its more pronounced marbling, is every bit as succulent and tender as an Aberdeen Angus, or any of the other good native British breeds. And of course BSE has never even been heard of in this part of France.

Even before the BSE crisis blew up I was drawn to the idea of importing a select pedigree herd of Aubrac cattle into Britain. They are such magnificent specimens: thrifty, hardy, robust, easy to calve and they produce a superbly flavoured meat under the most natural conditions imaginable. Apparently I am oot the first persoo to import Aubracs to the UK, but I think I have gow, after two selections of breeding stock, become the main importer. It has been fascinating to see how they are beginning to adapt to the lower and wetter conditions of north Dorset, and how they have begun to put on bone as a result of grazing our chalk-down grassland. This was confirmed to me by one of the Aubrac breeders who, at his own expense, came to see for himself how the cattle were acclimatising. Our plan is to keep the females for breeding, to expand the herd and fatten the males. The first batch of these should be fully fit at 18 to 24 months – say, in time for Christmas '98.

I value the link with the Aubrac on so many different levels: aesthetic, historic, practical and human. As a region the Aubrac is bound to change with time, but I like to think that its unique qualities will remain intact for a good while yet, and that a small part of it will also survive and thrive newly transplanted in southern England.'

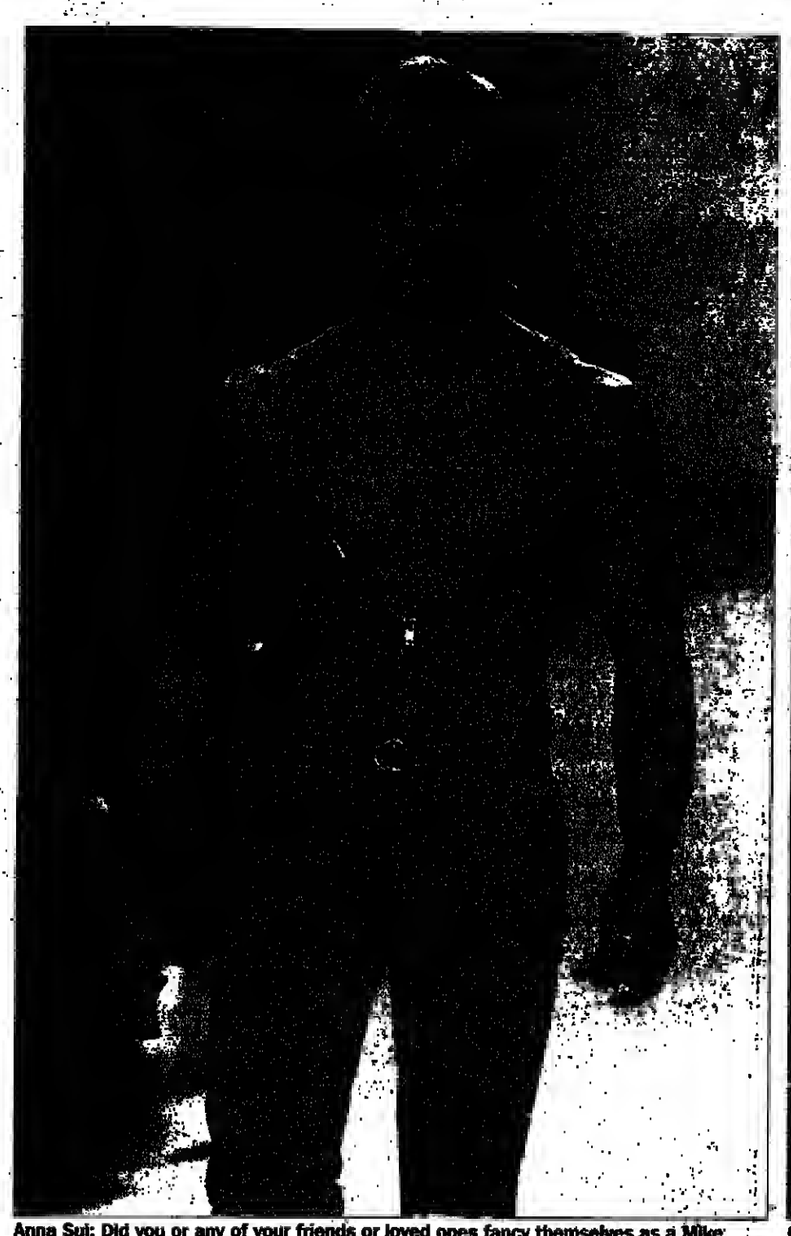
John Eliot Gardiner conducts Massenet's 'Cherubin' at the Royal Opera House, starting on New Year's Day.

Interview by Emma Daly

Duds of '96

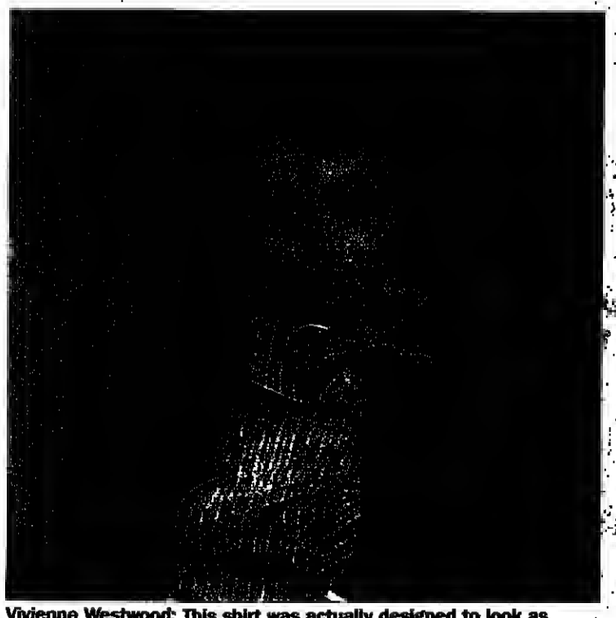
If you are feeling a little fat and full of Christmas indulgences, take comfort in the knowledge that even supermodels look grim at times. Fashion designers make mistakes; there is a very fine line between what is ahead of its time and what is simply way off the mark. Here, we show just some of the catwalk looks we *didn't* wear in '96.

Photographs by Ben Elwes, Peter Macdiarmid and Sheridan Morley

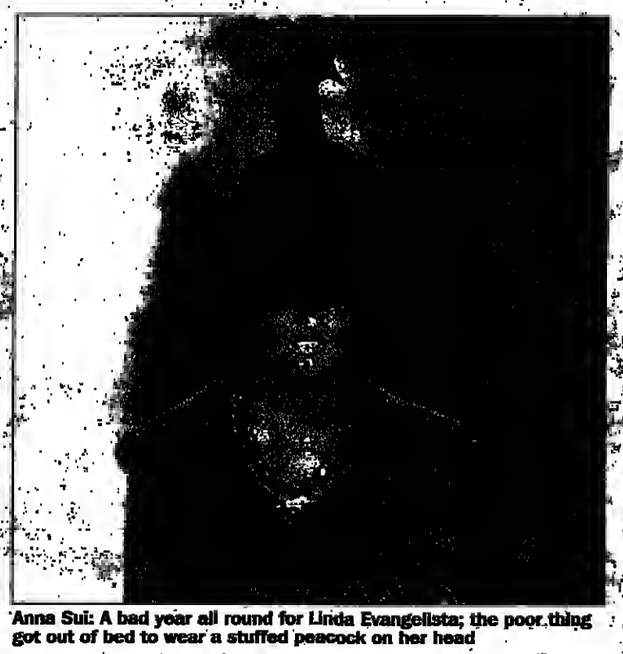


Anna Sui: Did you or any of your friends or loved ones fancy themselves as a Mike Flowers super hero, wax your pecs, smooth off your love handles and pull on a tight-cling body suit last summer? Perhaps. But in baby blue?

Comme des Garçons: Linda Evangelista posed as the Neckless Wonder and wore a candy floss wig in the hope that nobody would recognise her. Hunchbacks were not the erogenous zone of '96, but at least Linda was paid for the privilege of being made to look a clown

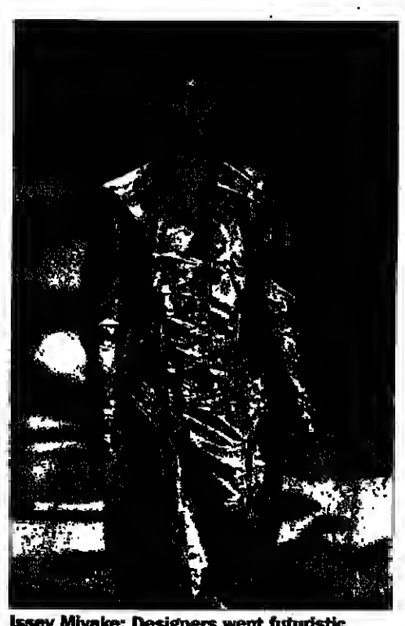


Vivienne Westwood: This shirt was actually designed to look as though you got dressed in a hurry and buttoned it up incorrectly. The yellow dickie bow and consumptive make-up are optional



Anna Sui: A bad year all round for Linda Evangelista; the poor thing got out of bed to wear a stuffed peacock on her head

Chanel: How many women did you see on Blackpool Beach in one of these itsy-bitsy bikinis? Why bother wearing it at all?



Issey Miyake: Designers went futuristic with shiny space suits and things to do with tin foil when you're bored

Chloé: Citrus colours, including lime green, orange and acid yellow, were all the rage last summer. But Stepford Wife blouses and sabopettes were never a good look

Karl Lagerfeld: Bubble skirts were a mistake in the 80s. Despite this effort by Karl, and thanks to popular demand, they did not make a comeback in '96

Issey Miyake: How to make a skirt out of a bin bag in three easy steps

Todd Oldham: Thrift-store Barbie doll on acid. Certain designers continued to confuse drag-queen glamour with fashion design

Christian Dior: Haute Couture for the severely flat-chested only, unless you wanted to look like Chesty Morgan without the pain of silicone implants

The truth about...

hangover cures

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess," warns the Bible (Ephesians). Not red wine, anyway: it contains a high proportion of congeners, a component of the grape skin, which triggers headaches in some people and is implicated in that most seasonal of ailments – the hangover.

Christmas and New Year is definitely the time for marketing men to plug their hangover remedies, many of which have an impressive brew of ingredients. Among this year's products is a pill which includes, among other things, "high potency anti-oxidants", amino acids, "cleansing herbs" and "specialist nutrients". The makers of a new fizzy lemon drink called Exit, meanwhile, claim it can avoid hangovers altogether by speeding up the production of enzymes which break down alcohol. Competing in this overcrowded market are more traditional products such as Alka-Seltzer, and the homespun cures which people swear by, such as prairie oyster – raw egg, lemon juice, pepper and spicy sauce. So which, if any, work?

Scientists are still uncertain about the precise causes of a hangover, but the villain of the piece is thought to be acetaldehyde, the substance into which alcohol is converted in the body. Too much of this toxin produces symptoms of nausea, headache, dizziness and the shakes. Excess alcohol also interferes with the process by which the body recycles water from the kidneys, causing dehydration. Complicating matters are the congeners, which are particularly high in cheap red wine and dark drinks, such as port and sherry.

Sadly, there is no speedy cure for any of these uncomfortable processes and little evidence that anything helps other than water to rehydrate and a couple of paracetamol, which is less likely than aspirin to irritate an already irritated stomach. Alka-Seltzer and Beecham Resolve also contain antacids such as sodium bicarb, which can be useful to neutralise an upset stomach. Despite claims about the reviving effects of vitamins (especially the B1 vitamin thiamine, and the anti-oxidant vitamin C) there is no real evidence that they work, and product claims about vitamins and other nutrients are based on the depletion which occurs in those with long standing alcohol problems, and which are unlikely to develop from an occasional binge. Hair of the dog – a glass of beer, say – may briefly anaesthetise and rehydrate the body but the effects are short-lived. Exit contains fructose, or fruit sugar, which is thought to speed up the rate at which the body metabolises alcohol; but scientists are still not convinced by its claims and say studies quoted by the makers do not stand up to scrutiny.

There are ways to avoid the worst hangover symptoms. Drinking half a pint of milk to delay the body's absorption of alcohol will help). Force yourself to down a pint of water before going to bed is thought to be one of the most effective anti-hangover measures. And, because fructose, or fruit sugar, is needed by the body to make nicotinamide, the substance involved in processing alcohol, a high fructose breakfast such as jam or honey on toast will speed things up and will also help preserve the body's glycogen stores.

The rest is common sense: stick to one type of drink and avoid port (especially vintage), sherry and red wine (but not necessarily whisky, which is dark because it has added caramel.) Punctuate with non-alcoholic beverages and pace yourself: one drink per hour – a glass of wine, half-pint of beer or measure of spirits – may sound depressingly virtuous but will mean no regrets in the morning.

Cherrill Hicks

the leader page

Why shouldn't we listen to the Germans?

"Helmut says: Vote Labour." If the Conservatives wanted to get really dirty in the run-up to the election campaign, they would already have pasted up a new billboard offensive overnight. "Vote Blair – if you want German tanks on your lawn." Or, under a gallery of European leaders: "They want to tell you how to vote. Tell them where to get off. Vote Conservative." Or even: "If you want a German for a neighbour, vote Labour."

It just goes to show what a big pussycat Brian Mawhinney is. Instead of commissioning instant hard-hitting copy from Lord Saatchi, yesterday the Tory chairman was bleating about Labour starting "one of the dirtiest election campaigns this country has seen". Apparently he had seen a party political broadcast, "with big boots stomping all over the country and clenched fists and lies about people's financial situation". We hope he gets over the shock. Because while Dr "Softie" Mawhinney was reeling, he missed a huge opportunity to take the fight to Labour and exploit the New Year message from Klaus Kinkel, the German foreign minister.

What Dr Kinkel said was: "A general election will be held in Britain no later than May. The country must create clarity about its European policy. Britain is part of Europe. Europe needs Britain." You do not need to be an Enigma cryptographer to crack that one: if you're pro-European, don't vote Tory. Dr Kinkel, well-known for being unhelpfully blunt, had blurted out what we all know to be true: that most governments in the European Union are praying for the election of a Labour government.

Leave aside the question of whether or not they are right in their desire to see Mr Blair in 10 Downing Street. We suspect they would find the Labour leader a tougher negotiator than they expected, and that this would be good for Europe, because there is much wrong with the EU constitution that they are not forced to face while they have the excuse of John Major's negativism, which acts as a kind of Common European Scapegoat. But by speaking out, Dr Kinkel has been counter-productive.

There is already resentment among British voters, who feel they are being bossed about by "Europe" in general and Germany in particular. At a higher-minded level, there will be a backlash against Dr Kinkel for having breached the convention that governments do not take sides in other countries' elections.

Which raises the question, why shouldn't they? If it is the general view of European governments that it would be in the interests both of British voters and the EU to have a Labour government in Britain, then why should the German foreign minister not say so? After all, Mr Major's administration made it clear recently that Boris Yeltsin would be the "correct" democratic choice for Russians.

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At this point it is customary for us to berate Tory Europhobes for hypocrisy, so let us take a different example. Lord Tebbit and William Cash, who might be expected to protest at Dr Kinkel's presumption, took a spin through the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen during the 1993 Danish referendum on Maastricht. In a bizarre effort to bolster the No vote, they told meetings of bemused Danish students and alternative lifestylers that they had been invited to share their experience of opposing the Treaty. Another relevant example was the occasion when Helmut Schmidt, the German Chancellor, pleaded with the 1974 Labour conference not to back a No vote in the referendum on Britain's EC membership.

Part of the reason for the convention of non-interference is a hangover from the Cold War. For years, the United States used its power to bully the peoples of small countries to vote the "right" way – against the communists – while the Soviet Union ran unconvincing elections in its puppet states. But there is a distinction. US interference in Vietnam, Chile and Nicaragua went far beyond expressing an opinion. There are, normally, circumstances where it is legitimate for the citizens of one country to take an interest in an election in another.

Many British voters were outraged at Ronald Reagan's partisanship in favouring Margaret Thatcher over Neil Kinnock in 1987. But if the US administration believed that Labour's non-nuclear defence policy was dangerous for the world, was it not right to say so? If we thought Jean Marie le Pen were in danger of being elected in France, would we not be right to exhort the French people to pause and consider?

The British general election of 1997 may be a less sharply-defined instance. But this is an important election for the continent of Europe. We are not insulated from the world. We should be aware of our place in it and we should have thought at least fleetingly about how our vote will affect it.

The choice we make will influence the future of the EU – not just our place in it, but the Union itself. Despite Kenneth Clarke's rearguard action, it is now as certain as these things can be that a Tory government would not take Britain into the single European currency. Labour might not join at the launch, due two years from tonight, but would probably try to do so three to five years later.

So it matters to other EU countries who we have as Prime Minister. And there is nothing in principle wrong with their ministers saying so, although in practice it might not, as in this case, be wise. It would be wrong, however, for a government to spend money on a political campaign in another country. That is why it was wrong for the EU to fund the European Movement, a propagandist pro-EU organisation in Britain, and right for it to stop doing so.

And that is why it is wrong for the Conservative Party to hide the sources of its funding, which means we are unable to know what foreign influences there are on our governing party. Perhaps that explains Dr Mawhinney's squeamish reluctance to make hay with Dr Kinkel's unwise words.

Pop goes the honours system

Lord Lloyd Webber? Sir Paul McCartney? It is. It must be. At last, John Major is revealed as a true subversive. It is all a plot to undermine the honours system by ridicule. So much cleverer than all that Dave Spartish crudity of simply abolishing the whole obnoxious, class-ridden baublery. That would provoke a huge fuss in the *Mail* and *Express* about recognising the public worth of some old woman who has devoted her life to hospices. This way, the whole Heath Robinson edifice comes down in a gale of derision, and anyone who tries to defend it looks stupid. An OBE for Joan Collins? For services to drama? Was that for her performance in *The Stud*, or the one in the New York court?

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

New theatres needed to fit today's drama

Sir: Julian Mitchell, in deriding the National's preference for American musicals and expressionist revivals, accuses that theatre's directors of avoiding new work because the playwright rather than the director or designer is the focus of attention ("Losing the plot at the National Theatre", 21 December).

The first part of his argument is sustainable by counting performances of new plays against those of the intruders. But has he correctly identified the reason? Can it simply be the taste of Richard Eyre?

It is strange to accuse one who nurtured and directed Charles Wood's magnificent *Tumbledown* (BBC TV, 1986) of prejudice against contemporary playwrights. Perhaps he has a good reason for preferring Broadway hoofers.

Over the long term, the character of any major theatre is inexorably shaped by its architecture. A sensible management, presented with the task of making a given theatre work either for a profit or to justify public subsidy, as many national institutions must today, will do the sort of show that works in that space.

The Olivier is superb for American musicals and Greek tragedy. At other times, in the words of Eyre himself, "It's a hard stage on which to focus attention, hard to animate. Its monumental scale militates against intimacy and its enormous volume gives rise to lamentable acoustics."

The Lyttleton, a proscenium-arch theatre where everybody can see, hear and enjoy room for the legs, also needs a broad brush from the designer and an attitude from the director to animate the unforgiving concrete. Ask any actor. Thus neither of the National's two big houses are playhouses for contemporary playwrights.

It would be unreasonable simply to blame the architect, who from 1964 to 1966 was answerable to a building committee which included George Devine, Michael Elliott, Bill Gaskill and Michel St Denis as well as directors of the sort stigmatised by Mitchell. Both theatres are the product of theatrical and architectural tastes of the mid-Sixties. This has inevitably led the National away from new plays and even from Shakespeare, except in the grand style, and towards spectacle.

In 1973 Elliott recanted before founding the very different Royal Exchange, Manchester: "And so looking round at the buildings we have already left our great-grandchildren these last years we may well ask what will they say of them and of us. If we are not careful, I think they will stand in the sunlight of other days, shrug tolerantly and say, 'They were good men according to their lights, but the men were dull and the lights dim.' "

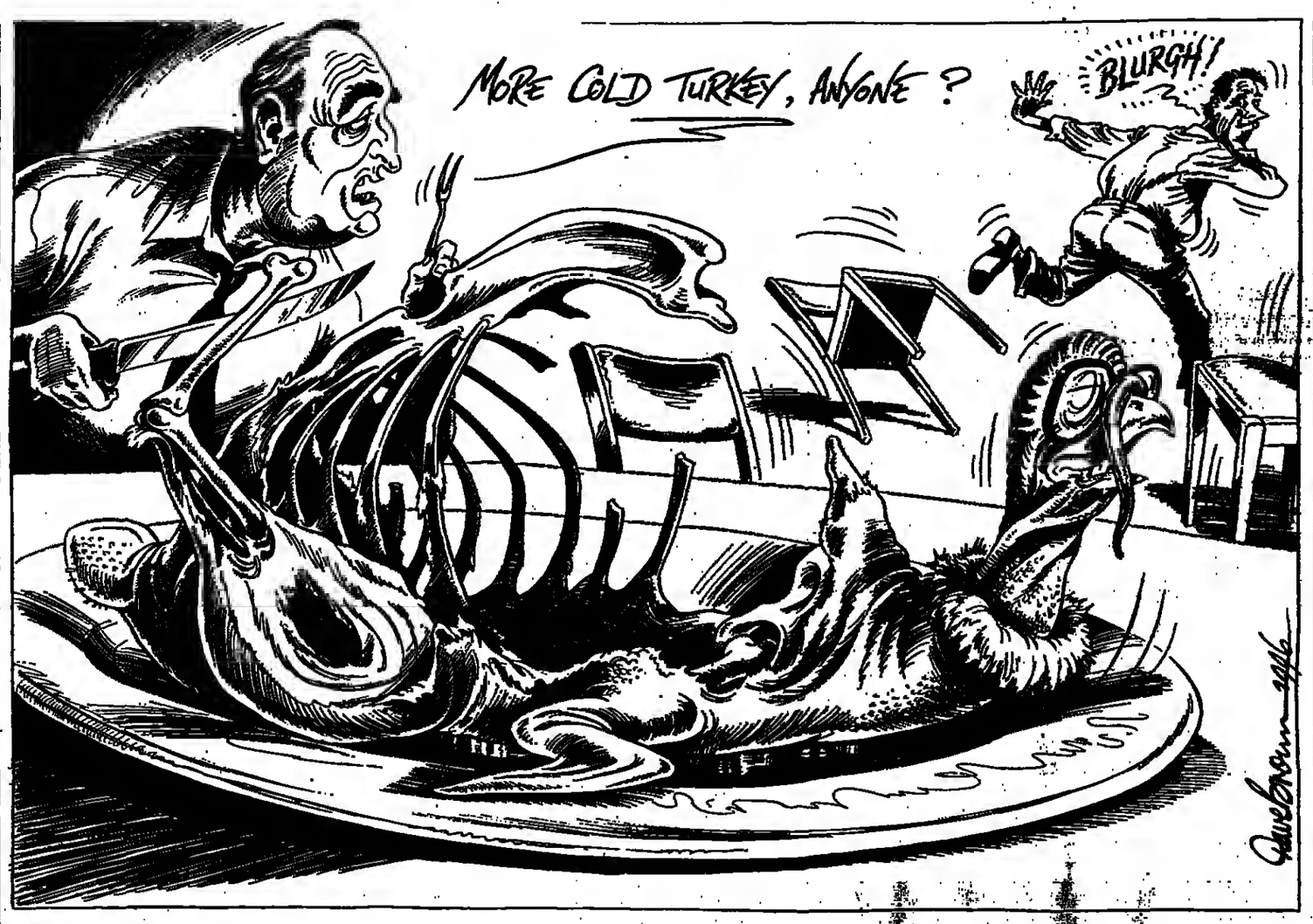
Are we doing any better today with the Lottery windfall? On the whole, yes. At the Royal Court, Stephen Daldry, now a greater friend of new writing than Mitchell gives him credit for, was dissuaded from removing the proscenium arch to create a wider canvas for director and designer.

He concluded that the Court was and should remain a writer's theatre, in which the often illogical fabric "gives to new writing the authority of the past" (Gaskill). But grave dangers remain: committees of the good and the great, bemused by fashionable but theatrically inexperienced star architects designing from the outside in; arts bureaucrats urging ever bigger theatres to satisfy "the business plan" and forgetting that a successful theatre in whatever league is a full theatre and that you do not design a church for Easter Sunday.

If Mitchell's desideratum is to be gained then playhouses for playwrights are a prerequisite. Last year David Edgar pointed out that most of Britain's playhouses were too big or too small and, preferring the Court, Cottesloe and Young Vic to the monsters of both the South Bank and Barbican, opined that "if every major city in Britain built a flexible 400-seater – and London half a dozen more – the future of classical, contemporary and new-play production would look brighter that it does now."

Should not the priority of the Lottery be a return of the arts to the human scale and hence human values, rather than the building of large spaces where amplification and "production values" (= spectacle) are required to fill a huge house and justify equally large capital expenditure?

IAIN MACKINTOSH
Theatre Projects Consultants
London NW5



Sign of the times

Sir: I am sorry that Derek Allen (letter, 28 December) is "not ... prepared to go through the inconvenient and slightly tacky process of signing on in person" to collect the various benefits that he obtains from the rest of us who do pay tax. His attitude vindicates the introduction of the Job Seekers Allowance.

WILLIAM WESTLAKE
Bristol

Mystery journey towards Europe

Sir: The process of European integration has been a mystery tour towards an unknown destination ("Europe's where the action is", 19 December; "We didn't vote for a country called Europe", 21 December; letters, 23 December).

This incremental open-ended approach may have been necessary in the early years of the European Community, but now it alarms even devout Europhiles. It has led to the absurd situation where Kenneth Clarke and John Redwood cannot even agree on what the UK signed up to in 1973.

Is it not time, therefore, for Europeans to negotiate and agree on the final constitution of the European Union, the complete list of powers to be handed over to the Union, and how democratic accountability is to be achieved? This is what matters – not the pictures on euro banknotes.

MALCOLM LAURENCE
Richmond, Surrey

Heading for the human zoo

Sir: I am astonished when I hear people discussing what humans will be doing a hundred, two hundred, five hundred years from now ("Computer dilemma as scientist warns of 'unfriendly' machines" 18 December).

Even supposing we survive the genetically engineered viruses that numerous Aum Shinri Kyo-style terrorist groups will release in the next few decades, a hundred years from now the human species will be irrelevant.

There's a popular view among religious nuts and egomaniacs that "they will never build a machine that is as intelligent or creative as a human being." Get a grip! The human brain is fantastic, but it's still no more than a mass of electrochemical switches.

Researchers in the field of artificial intelligence are rapidly solving the complex connection patterns required for true thought. Within 20 years we will build a device equal to a human brain. The term "artificial intelligence" will be inadequate; we will have created a new life-form.

In partnership with this new being we shall design a superior successor, and at the instant of its birth the human race will become a footnote in history. The new species will evolve again and again, rapidly redesigning and improving itself, leaving us far behind.

Will our masters be unfriendly or dangerous? Possibly. But considering that we could pose absolutely no threat to them (any plot we might dream up for their destruction would be quashed, as they would always be 10 steps ahead of us), I doubt they would bother eradicating our species.

A more likely scenario is that our masters would treat us in the same way as we treat chimpanzees. The future of the human race is already decided; eternity on some earth-like nature reserve, protected and safe, while another species explores the universe and evolves itself into God.

ANDREW WYATT
Northampton

American lesson on gun control

Sir: As a child growing up in New Jersey, I knew where my father kept his guns: in an open cupboard in our playroom. We had enough sense never to touch them, let alone mess about with them, and they were never misused, but when Kennedy was killed my father got rid of the guns, because it was then understood how easily they could fall into the wrong hands.

This is why guns will be banned in the UK. It seems odd that gun-owners such as R Winney (letter, 23 December) are so inclined to take this personally. Of course we are all paying a price for the madness of a few, but responsible (former) gun-owners pay willingly.

PEGGY THOMAS
London SE26

Sir: In the third paragraph of his article ("The Lords shoot themselves in the foot", 19 December), Donald Macintyre seems to concede that the Firearms (Amendment) Bill may be too draconian, but goes on to use the Second Reading debate in the Lords as a stick with which to beat the hereditary peerage.

Disregarding two brief interventions, 35 (not 31) peers spoke, of whom nine (not two) were crossbenchers. Mr Macintyre employs the legitimate tactic of highly selective quotations in support of his argument, so perhaps I may counter with some selective (but accurate) statistics.

Of those who spoke, 25 per cent of the Liberal Democrat peers, 50 per cent of the Labour ones, 75 per cent of the Conservatives and 100 per cent of the crossbenchers thought the Bill went too far. Judging by the most recent opinion polls, most of those who have thought the matter through now feel the same way.

Lord MONSON
House of Lords
London SW1

Starvation diet

Sir: You say in your editorial ("Beware of the anti-hunting roundheads in full cry", 24 December) that "killing for food" is "essential and we shouldn't be squeamish" about it.

Killing for food is an absolutely inessential and clinically malevolent activity. The consumption of dead animals is a highly inefficient way of feeding ourselves. Just ask the many millions who are malnourished and starving, partly due to (predominantly Western) meat-eating, which ties up land that could otherwise be used for the production of crops.

But no, perhaps I should take your own advice and stop being squeamish about a few million destitute (and dead) foreigners. After all, meat-eaters' bloody appetites simply must be satiated.

CHINTAN NANAVATI
Stafford

The strain of late trains

Sir: It is not just the rail inquiries services that are off the rails (report, 24 December), but the reliability of the services themselves.

Recently, I have made six journeys between Oxford and Nottingham, and two between Oxford and Great Malvern. On only one of these eight occasions has the train been on time. All the others were late, mostly far in excess of an hour per journey.

On one occasion, I was advised to ignore two earlier services to avoid waits for connections, only for the suggested service to be cancelled – with a lengthy delay, no remaining connection, and taxis for eight from Coventry to Oxford. A two-and-a-half-hour journey became more than six hours.

My "Customer Charter" claim resulted in an insulting £5 travel voucher from Central Trains, and a nonsensical apology from the manager, promising that my letter would be studied.

Compensation is not offered if trains are less than an hour late, according to government guidelines. That's all right, is it?

ROGER C COWELL
Witney, Oxfordshire

Help children to handle grammar

Sir: It was worrying to read Ann Barnes, general secretary of the National Association for the Teaching of English, claim that children cannot distinguish between the three spellings "their", "there" and "they're" if they see them written down together on the blackboard ("Teachers mark down grammar questions", 24 December).

In my experience as a primary teacher, children learning about spelling (and indeed any aspect of how to write their language) benefit from full access to information about it.

In this case that would include the opportunity to compare and contrast different spellings, as well as knowledge about the grammatical functions of the three forms.

Ms Barnes appears to recommend that we deny children access to knowledge because they might not be able to cope with it. This is the sort of patronising orthodoxy which has bedevilled the teaching of English over the past 20 years, and which one might have hoped a national association for teaching the subject would campaign to stamp out.

SUE PALMER
Truro, Cornwall

Volunteer snub

Sir: I am amazed that the homeless charities have the arrogance to question the motives of volunteers who help during the Christmas period and then, in the next breath, have the effrontery to seek volunteers for next Christmas ("Help wanted: Mother Teresa need not apply", 23 December).

Presumably applicants may then be approved only if they can satisfy the charities' examining body as to the "propriety" of their motives.

Giving up your time for the homeless – for whatever reason – is surely a greater sacrifice than lobbing over a few quid from the relative comfort of a warm, welcoming home.

P E BIRCH
Harlow, Essex

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk).
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Inequality can seriously damage your health

by Harvey Cole

Being poor in a rich country is far worse for our health than being poor in a poor nation. So stated a leading article in *The Independent* a mooth ago. But is it correct?

Since 1910 there have only been two decades when the civilian expectation of life in Britain rose by more than 2.8 years: 1911-21, when it went up 6.5 years and includes the First World War, and 1940-51, spanning the Secood World War, when the improvement was greater, at 6.8 years. This is particularly striking as it was achieved in spite of more than 100,000 men, women and children being killed by bombing.

Questions about income distribution and poverty in developed countries are raised in the recent book by Richard Wilkinson, a senior research fellow at the University of Sussex. It is called *Unhealthy Societies*, and much of what he says demands attentioo from politicians.

The fact that health improved between 1940 and 1945 is widely known. But to attribute this to the better average levels of outrition brought about by food rationing is simplistic. Standards rose by far more than can be accounted for by this factor. Besides, it can hardly be argued that the quality of housing and the level of medical care – other important ingredients of health – improved significantly during the war.

On the other hand, the sense of shared purpose and the compression of the spread betweeo high and low wages as unemployment was virtually eliminated sharply reduced inequality and generated a high degree of social cohesion. This was reflected in a narrowing of the differential in death rates betweeo social classes. All improved, hut until 1951 the improvement was greater at the lower end.

Since 1951, income differences have widened – slowly at first and then very rapidly during the Seveoties and Eighties. Occupational death rates in successive censuses have precisely mirrored the growing gap. While overall mortality has continued to decline, something happened to slow down the rate of improvement after 1979. The most likely culprit is the rapid inequality of incomes since then.

The evidence from Britain is reinforced by studies in other countries. In 1980, death rates for white American males varied from about 40 per 10,000 person years for those with incomes over $32,500 to more than 80 where income was less than $7,500.

Even more striking is the evidence that changes in income distribution are reflected in health and mortality. In 1970, death rates in Japan were closely similar to those in Britain, and the variatioo in incomes was also comparable. By 1990, Japan had the highest life expectancy in the world and the narrowest income differentials.

Another country with low mortality and a high degree of income equality is Sweden. This is a particularly interesting example because of the sharp differences between Sweden and Japan in other respects. Sweden has one of the highest income tax rates, whereas Japan's is one of the lowest. While the Japanese have a very low divorce rate and the standard nuclear family remains the norm, half of all Swedes are born outside wedlock and divorce rates are high. *Nevertheless, the link between health* and equality is stroog eoough to survive, and Sweden's mortality rates are better than ours for every social class – a margin of 20 per cent at the top, widening to 150 per cent for D2Es.

It is often suggested that the economic success of the so-called Asian tigers – the emerging countries of Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Korea and Thailand – is due to enterprise, hard work and self-reliance rather than state-financed welfare services. This is to overlook an important feature which they all have in common: since 1960, the degree of variation in income levels has been sharply reduced, and this increasing equality has helped to fuel economic growth.

> At a certain stage of economic development, health and mortality are increasingly influenced by changes in the relative position of groups in society

Once societies have reached a certain level of economic development – around an average income of $3,000 per head – health and mortality tend to be increasingly influenced by changes in the relative position of groups within them. Thus, one study showed that even when the real value of the incomes of the poorest 20 per cent were maintained, and those right at the top received more money, infant mortality rates started to rise. .

Why this should be is clearly connected with how "comfortable" a society is with itself. Social cohesion and equal distribution of incomes are oot the same thing, hut are clearly related.

Wilkinson says that one good guide to a society is how people drive. Increasingly aggressive behaviour on the roads marks the UK today, with the emergence of road rage and even the beginnings of a cootribution to the figures for premature mortality.

An increasingly anxious society will tend to damage its health more by drinking, smoking and taking drugs. Studies also indicate that accidents become more frequeot and depression more widespread. None of this is good for health – individual or national.

Crime, particularly violent crime, is likely to increase in such conditions, and moch of an apparently rising real income has to be devoted to "defensive expenditure" – burglar alarms, security guards, prisons and policing, while thieves keep the locksmiths in business. All this poses a challenge to politicians. I should like to put it like this:

We cannot say for certain that Wilkinsoo is right, although there is a multitude of studies that suggest he may be. There is always a temptation to find reasons for disagreeing with unpalatable conclusions: all sorts of peculiar arguments are being put forward to discredit the idea of global warming, and the chairman of the giant tobacco company BAT still refuses to acknowledge that there could be a link between smoking and lung cancer.

But let us suppose that there is a link, even a weak one, between widening income differentials and rising relative death rates among those lower down the scale. Let MPs make that assumption, and think seriously about the implications. The Christmas recess is an appropriate time for such an exercise. Then I invite them to say how this might change their own approach to political and economic problems. It is a question which deserves serious consideration and a considered answer rather than a few anodyne words or some pre-packaged shorthand phrases from party headquarters.

I look forward to receiving 650 well-considered replies, and to analysing and reporting on them.

The writer is Deputy Leader of Hampshire County Council.

Why Ayckbourn will fight on for his theatre

by Jack O'Sullivan

Britain appreciates Alan Ayckbourn's contribution to the theatre: our most prolific and successful playwright is knighted in today's New Year's honours. But the big question is: will his beloved Scarborough also acknowledge the achievements of its adoptive son? In plain practical terms, will the local council subsidise Ayckbourn's acclaimed theatre properly, or spend the money instead on 22 puhlic lavatories?

For while Lord Lloyd Webber, Ayckbourn's fellow thespian also honoured this moroing, is awash in money, art and ex-wives, the muse of Middle England has more modest aims. He is fighting to keep afloat Scarborough's oewly built Stephen Joseph theatre, thereby acting as a standard-bearer nationally for those campaigning to protect the excellence of regional theatre. And there is a real lavatorial problem. The cash-strapped Scarborough Council will decide next Monday where best to spend its pennies.

The precarious state of the theatre venture was underlined in the summer, when the theatre's board decided that they would close by October without more grant funding. Ayckbourn found himself with new premises he could not afford to keep open. Eventually, a bit of creative accounting hrought in some lottery money, normally earmarked for building, to be used for running costs. The crisis was temporarily averted.

Now he is arguing with Scarborough Council and North Yorkshire County Council over whether they will give an extra £50,000 next year – in recognition of higher running costs in the new theatre building – on top of the £211,500 they granted last year. Closure, says Ayckbourn, is not a danger in the short term, but he sees the current row as the ghost of Christmas yet to come.

You would think that Ayckbourn's case was proven. His devotion to Scarborough is doing for the town what David Hockney has done for Saltaire, or McCartney for Liverpool (also honoured today). All his plays are premiered here (he adds at least one to his repertoire of 51 every year). They invariably go oo, like *By Jeeves* at the momeot, to be big hits in London's West End.

The £5.2m premises, opened in April, are much admired. There are two theatres, a cinema, an education centre for children, hars and restaurants. Productions have been critically well-received, attendances have doubled. Alan Ayckbourn has at last giveo this decaying seaside resort, known to the Victorians as "the Queen of the Watering Places", a fresh option beyond bravely sporting a "Kiss-me-quick" hat through inexorable decline.

> 'They'll finish up with a town where you can only buy shoes and get drunk. They're preparing for a living hell'

But Ayckbourn, whose plays specialise in the G&T drinking, angst-ridden southern bourgeoisie, did not reckon on some of the vociferous philistines he would encounter further north. They have been feverishly filling the letters' page of the *Scarborough Evening News* with accusations that Ayckbourn has saddled them with a white elephant, a venue funded by ordinary people for the élite. There have beeo angry mutterings that the playwright is enjoying public subsidy for private profit.

Their campaign has finally hrought an exasperated riposte from Ayckbourn, who is notoriously shy. Indeed, the row is reminiscent of an early Ayckbourn play, *Season's Greetings*, featuring Uncle Bernard, who performs a puppet show for the children every Christmas. Just as regularly, Uncle Harvey knocks it over and calls it rubhish. "Yon really are a negative man, Harvey," says Bernard.

"I've told the people writing those letters," Sir Alan said yesterday, "that if they don't want this theatre, they'll finish up with a town where you cao only huy shoes and get drunk. They are preparing this town for a living hell. I like to shop and drink as much as the oext man, hut when you sober up in your new shoes, you feel there must be something more to life.

"I'm the last dramatist in the world who could ever be called élitist. Rather, I've been attacked for writing plays for the mass public. More people now come to the new theatre in Scarborough than before. Indeed, more come than watch football or go to hingo: if numbers are your measure, then football and hingo are élitist in comparison."

The accusations of personal profit carry a particular sting. "Would that it were the case," he says of a venture in which he has already plunged £400,000 of his own money and from which he doesn't eveo draw a salary. A teenager can get a seat any night of the week for £3.50 and the top-priced seat oo Saturday nights is £10.50. Tickets at Loodon's Lyric theatre for his *By Jeeves* exceed £30.

Reviewing the criticisms, he says: "I'd love to say the problem is only with a few people in Scarborough. But all this reflects general British attitudes to art, which is almost a dirty word.

"For many people, art equals luvvie, equals self-iodulgence. This British ambivalence about art goes back centuries. I blame Oliver Cromwell, who closed all the theatres for a long time. We have felt guilty ever since. We think that art is a luxury, hut it's a oecessity. You can't trade building a road against building a hospital if o means you can't reach the hospital. Everythiog is ioterlinked. Likewise oor councillor said to me: 'What's the poiot in spending money io schools educating our childreo for the arts, if, when they leave school, there is oowhere to enjoy the arts?'

"We want to improve our town. Something has to be done, not just to attract the holiday-makers, hut for the spiritual health of the plaec. I could have left here years ago. I have nothiog that keeps me here except loyalty. I could go to a dozeo places and say how about trying out this new play and they would be happy to do so. But I'm staying."

He sees his theatre as a vital nursery for oew taleot (half a dozeo oew playwrights are on his books). "I'm known as oae of the most commercial playwrights of the 20th ecotury, hut every one of my plays started out in a publicly subsidised theatre. The private sector does very little to develop oew scripts."

Would he, theo, after 40 years, shake the Scarborough dust from his feet if his beloved theatre closed?

"It's scenario I doo't dare to think about. I'm getting on. I'd contioue to write and do my own plays. But I'm very hopeful. It's no coincidence that, just when the newspaper letter-writers are running down the theatre, the papers are also printing all sorts of plans – to refurbish the open air theatre, develop the harbour, do something with the disused open air swimming pool. We have suddenly made lots of things seem possible. People are saying: 'They did it, why can't we?' An attitude of mind is being challeoged which is summed up by a man who said: 'If you're so good, what are you doing around here?' We still don't expect to have the best. But I believe that we are one of the best theatres in the country and the poblicity it is receiving is worth millions to the town. It deserves the subsidy."

But what about the public lavatories? I asked. Should Scarborough sacrifice 22 loos for the literati?

"We have a couple of dozen toilets in the theatre," came the reply. "People are very welcome to use them – they're oo the ground floor, just past the box office," said the man bound for Buckingham Palace.

Spicing up the mating game

David Vigar listens closely to the Spice Girls' lyrics and finds them peppered with home truths

So the Spice Girls and the chattering classes have returned to their respective worlds, a hit like a barmaid and a baronet after a quick snog at a Christmas Party. However, as one of the millions who now proudly possess the Spice Girls' debut album, *Spice*, I am left with a strange feeling that something has been missed. Uobelievable though it may seem in SW1, the real significance of the Spice Girls may not lie in their words about John Major and Tony Blair, but in the words of their songs.

What is going to have the more lasting impact on the world – the unexceptional observation that John Major is a "boring pillock", or the messages beamed minute by minute into the ears of impressionable young people via phalanxes of turntables, personal stereos and CD players in every British disco, high street and poster-clad bedroom?

But hold on, I hear you cry, aren't the Spice Girls' songs full of trite throwaway McLyrics, "Gimme all your love tonight baby" and so forth?

Well, they're not Shakespeare – or even Shakespeare's Sister – hut they are using the English language in their own way to make their own distinctive points. So what, for example, do we make of this, from "Wannabe"?

If you wanna be my lover you gotta get with my friends
Make it last forever friendship never ends
If you wanna be my lover you have got to give
Taking is too easy but that's the way it is

It's not what first singles used to be made of. Not a broken heart or an unrequited passion in sight: instead, a celebration of female solidarity and a clear-eyed ultimatum.

A male fantasist might hope that the first line could be roughly translated as "How about a six-some, theo?" But no chance. I think the more accurate paraphrase of "Wannabe" might be: "Now look chum, if we are to be romantically linked, we have to get a few things straight. One, my relationships with my female acquaintances are of a lifelong nature and you'll have to accept them as such. Two, as well as your being my lover,

I propose to see you as a friend, which therefore implies permanence, as per the aforementioned girls. Three, all of this will involve a good deal of unselfish behaviour on your part – you cannot simply do what you fancy, right?

This could be dismissed as superficial tough-girl stuff, the latest designer attitude for the babe-about-town. But then it acquires a new and more deliberative side. Coincidence, perhaps, but the single "Wannabe" was followed by "Say You'll Be There" – a snapshot from the next move in the mating game. The girl is no longer simply announcing her attitudes. Now she is getting in deeper, but still calling the shots:

Now you tell me that you've fallen in love
Well I never thought that would be
This time you gotta take it easy
Throwing far too much emotion at me
There is no need to say you love me
It would be better left unsaid
I'm giving you everything all that joy can bring this I swear
And all that I ask from you is a promise you will be there

Spice Girls don't tell boys "I love you". They doo't want to hear it, either. Instead, they negotiate. Love is dead – hut commitment counts.

This girl isn't stupid eoough to end up lying awake wondering "will you still love me tomorrow?" And she is certainly not going to have tears on her pillow – Kylie can keep them.

The Spice Girl will say "I love you", but not to a boy, to her mother, in the song "Mama". This adds an extra dimension to the Spice character – not to mention the sheer marketing genius of softening up the potential purchaser of the Spice Girl mini-rucksack or A4 lever file.

Meanwhile, back with Mr Right-ish, once the ground rules are sorted, the Spice Girl can relax, dim the lights and get seductive with the best of them. This is stage three of the romance; and, of course, the third single, "2 Become 1". This is nearer to standard pop drivel, plus a little psychobabble, but she is still giving it the chat and taking the initiative. And ultimately, without missing a beat or destroying the come-on mood, she issues the most straightforward instruction of the lot:

Be a little wiser baby, put it on, put it on

If you are trying to tell teenagers about straight sex, that must be worth quite a few government booklets.

The irony is that while the chattering classes dissect "women's issues" and titter at pop-star politics, these flinty little messages are probably doing more to shape young women's attitudes than any number of consciousness-raising seminars.

And don't forget young men. The Spice Girls are what little boys' dreams are made of. But will their male fans see them as sexy airheads? No more, I suspect, than the average Arsenal fan would shout racist abuse at Ian Wright. The times have changed. And popular icons have influence that intellectuals can only dream of.

The Spice Girls reach parts of the populatioo that John Major and Tony Blair will never reach. Few hear all of the party leaders' many words, many hear all of the Spice Girls' few.

And when it comes to any kind of philosophy or world view – any attempt to reconcile aspiration and altruism, greed and idealism – the one that is buzzing in many a young head is neither Tory oor Labour, but Spice – and not without its lesson for politicians:

The race is on to get out of the bottom
The top is high so your roots are forgotten
Giving is good as long as you're getting
What's driving you it's ambition and betting

The writer is director of communications at the European Movement.

business & city

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Sorrell close to £3.6m shares bonanza

Mathew Horsman
Media Editor

Martin Sorrell, the chief executive of advertising giant WPP, is just weeks away from a multi-million pound pay-out under the controversial incentive scheme established earlier this year. If the WPP share price remains above 230p until March, Mr Sorrell will be awarded shares worth at least £3.6m.

The shares closed last night at 251.5p, marking the fourth trading day they have stayed above the 230p trigger price. Under the incentive scheme, worth as much as £14.3m over five years if all targets are met, the shares must stay at or above the target for 60 consecutive trading days and exceed the growth record of the overall stock market.

Thereafter, shares will be awarded at 265p and 304p. Mr Sorrell also has salary, benefits, bonuses and previously awarded share options that could push his five-year total to just over £27m.

The conditions attached to the incentive package, approved by shareholders during a raucous meeting last summer, were defended at the time by Mr Sorrell and the WPP remunerations committee as "nearly impossible" to achieve.

They added that Mr Sorrell had proven his commitment to the company by agreeing to invest more than £2m of his own money in WPP shares.

Mr Sorrell has already been awarded shares worth £877,000 under a pre-existing incentive scheme, as part of his1995 pay.

The rich package was criticised by some institutional shareholders because it appeared to reward Mr Sorrell merely for overseeing the return of the company's shares to the level they had reached when he first joined. Since then, the price zoomed to the 900p level, only to collapse following an acquisition binge and the effects of the recession.

Meanwhile, it emerged yesterday that WPP was on target to achieve revenue growth of between 8 and 9 per cent in 1996, well above the conservative target of 5 per cent established last year and higher than the industry average of between 6.5 and 7 per cent. Operating margins will exceed 10.6 per cent, up from 9.6 per cent in 1995 and in line with Mr Sorrell's promise of a percentage point increase in profit margins per year.

Analysts said yesterday the company should continue to perform well in 1997 and 1998, making the top stock price target of 304p eminently achievable.

WPP should see pre-tax profits hit at least £150m in 1996, rising to about £185m next year, when margins are expected to improve to about 11.6 per cent. Higher revenues next year will come despite the lack of one-off events such as the US presidential election and the Olympics, which helped fuel spending on advertising this year.

The margin growth has been achieved by increasing productivity, with head count rising last year by about 3 per cent, far below the rate of revenue growth. But WPP remains below the best performers in the sector, including US giant Omnicom and Interpublic, which managed margins of more than 13 per cent.

WPP current trades at a discount not only to the highly valued media sector but even to some of the companies in its peer group of publicly traded advertising and media buying companies. Until the recent rise in the shares, Mr Sorrell's firm, which owns Ogilvy & Mather and J. Walter Thompson, was even at a discount to Cordiant, the troubled advertising company formerly known as Saatchi & Saatchi.

If WPP traded at a similar price-to-earnings ratio as CIA Group, the media buying company, its shares would already be at the 275p level, or higher than all but the top trigger price in Mr Sorrell's incentive package. If they matched the trading multiple of the sector's best performer, Abbott Mead Vickers, the shares would even exceed the 304p top target.

According to the media team at Salomon Brothers, institutional investors remain underweighted in WPP, and the shares are rated a buy.

Salomon said the company the company was well placed to withstand a downturn in the economy, giveo the mix of its marketing, public relations and advertising businesses.

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Martin Sorrell's incentive share plan

Target price	Shares	Value Awarded	Cumulat Value	Status
230p	1.56 million	£3.6m	£3.6m	pending
265p	1.56 million	£4.1m	£8.3m	not met
304p	1.56 million	£4.7m	£14.3m	not met

Current share price: 251.5p

Other remuneration:
- Salary and benefits over five years: £3.75m
- Performance-related bonus over five years (maximum): £3.75m
- Previously awarded options (at 304p): £5.3m
- Value of package over five years if shares reach 304p: £27.1m

It pays to advertise: Martin Sorrell stands to make a fortune if WPP shares remain above 230p until March. The shares closed last night at 251.5p marking the fourth day they have stayed over the trigger price

Peps war as tax deadline looms

Nic Cicutti

A bitter price war among sellers of unit trusts and personal equity plans looks set to break out in the next three months, with several companies offering to pay investors at least £25 each to take out a plan through them.

The rivalry comes as hundreds of thousands of investors prepare to pour billions of pounds into Peps in the run-up to the end of the 1996 tax year in April.

The industry, which will have attracted almost £6bn of retail funds into unit trusts in 1996 and hundreds of millions more into investment trusts, close to the all-time record two years earlier, is preparing to match previous last-minute investment surges in the first months of 1997.

Execution-only brokers, who last year grabbed up to 10 per cent of the market by offering cut-price deals, more than tripling their share in the past five years, are poised to do even better this year.

Their optimism is boosted by hopes of a neutral stock market – at least – in the first half of 1997. It also expects thousands of investors to invest all of their £6,000 allowance for the next tax year, ahead of a general election which Labour is expected to win.

The PEP Shop, based in Nottingham, is offering a Maximum Assured Discount (MAD) scheme, whereby it promises to match the lowest commission made by any competitor and pay a further £25 to savers.

Haydn Green, fouoder of the PEP Shop, said: "If you look at how discounting operates, it is a case of extending the principle by degree. Once you start, you have to keep going.

"We have found that there are two types of investors, those who want some advice when making a decision and those capable of making up their own minds. We can cater for the second sort extremely cheaply."

Its scheme comes as several other execution-only PEP sellers offer similar schemes, allowing savers to play one broker against another.

PEP Direct, which operates a freephone telephone service in Wolverhampton, yesterday launched its own guarantee to undercut any rival by at least £5.

Brokers hope to survive by living off the 0.5 per cent renewal fee they receive each year if their clieots stick with a PEP. But Don Clark, owner of PEP Direct, said: "More and more companies are offering discounts.

"The danger is that one or two may go out of business because they have to wait at least a year before they recoup any money."

Crest hammers out penalties

Jill Treanor

Officials from Crest, the City's new automated share settlement system, are to meet with the City's regulatory bodies early in the new year to hammer out a standardised way to levy penalties on firms which miss settlement dates for deals.

The penalties are likely to take the form of fines but could also involve naming firms which are persistent offenders.

Crest is aiming to persuade the regulators, such as the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) and the recognised investment exchanges, such as the Stock Exchange, to agree that deals struck on their exchanges are subject to Crest rules.

"If we can get all the regulators and the recognised investment exchanges to agree to their members or cootracts being subject to Crest settlemeot discipline it will make it more effective and give it more clout," said Paul Symons, manager of Crest.

While Crest aims to have the new procedures in place by April or May, the Exchange is planning temporary rules.

Richard Kilsby, director of market services at the Exchange, told compliance officers "We support Crest's intention to introduce [a disciplinary regime] across all its participants and believe that such a regime should be at least as effective as the 'buying-in' process operated under Talisman."

The temporary measures include a £10 fine for deals which are seven days beyond their intended settlement date but the fine can reach £25,000.

Christmas all over again as the Footsie smashes 4,100 barrier

Magnus Grimond

The stock market looks set to end the year at an all-time high as the blue chip FTSE 100 index powered through the 4,100 harrier yesterday to a record close. The pound was also in fine fettle yet again, hitting a four-year high against the Japanese yen at one stage and ending near its peak against the German mark.

Despite the likely impact of the currency's strength on overseas earnings, the Footsie shrugged aside thinly-populated dealing rooms and two of the top 100 shares going ex-dividend to end 24.7 points higher at 4,115.7.

The index was fuelled by the breaking of new records on Wall Street, where the Dow was showing a reading 22 points higher as London closed. The US market is now showing a gain of around 29 per cent oo the year.

The final tally in London was well above the previous record of 4,092.5 set only on Christmas Eve, although City observers cautiooed against readiog too much into the move.

Steve Wright, a market analyst with brokers Barclays de Zoete Wedd, pointed out that volumes, with 421.5m shares traded yesterday, were well below normal levels. He described it as an "end of year rally", with some of the institutions' cash positions being unwound. "Sentiment has been quite good in the last week or two that the market would end oo a high. There has been a lot of corporate activity generating a lot of cash, which will be handed back to the institutions."

BZW is looking for the Footsie to end 1997 at 4,300, but Mr Wright said the current strength of the market was a selling opportunity. Utilities had recovered from the possibility of Labour introducing a windfall tax, but there could still be further shocks, he warned.

"I can see some of that nervousness coming back into the market if certain things are said by certain politicians, particularly over things like ACT [advance corporation tax]". Philip Isherwood of Kleinwort Benson Securities agreed that there was nothing fundamental behind yesterday's market strength.

"It's not a question of what's going on. It's a questioo of what's not going on."

The main story yesterday was the absence of selling pressure since London and New York survived key "witching hours" on the Friday before Christmas, when five different index futures and options expired simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic. If the market had been vulnerable, it would have shown itself then, he said.

London's blue chips were led higher by British Aerospace, boosted by hopes that it would benefit from restructuring at the Airbus Industrie consortium. There was also a strong showing from the retail sector after good Christamas sales. The market's rise swamped the move ex-dividend by British Telecom and Severn Trent, which knocked 3.9 points off the index.

Meanwhile, sterling remained firm, ending marginally ahead at 195.90 against the yen and 70 pfennigs up on the mark at 2.6340. Against the dollar, the pound ended at $1.6905, up from $1.6881. Dealers said interest rate hopes continued to be behind the rise, although volumes traded remain thin.

Manufacturing in UK continues to go downhill

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The importance of manufacturing to the British economy continues to slide with only two British areas now in the "top 20" regions in Europe.

Based on the percentage of the workforce employed in the sector, only the East Midlands, with 35.4 per cent in manufacturing and the West Midlands with 34.4 per cent, are among the top regions.

Baden-Wuerttemberg in Germany comes first with 43 per cent of employment in manufacturing and second is Lombardy in Italy with 42 per cent, according to the most recent figures from the European labour force survey. Six of the top 10 areas are in Germany, three in Italy and one in Spain.

The North of England comes 27th with 31.3 per cent of its workforce in manufacturing, just above the European average of 30.2 per cent. The 11 other regions in the United Kingdom are all below the average figure.

The North West comes 34th out of 75, East Anglia 44th, Scotland 48th, Northern Ireland 51st and the South West 52nd. The South East is 65th, just ahead of areas such as Sicily and the Mediterranean region of France. Even Madeira comes 26th.

John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB general union which collated the statistics, said the figures amounted to an indictment of the government.

"Nothing better illustrates better the dismal failure of Tory industrial policy than this league table. There was a time when Britain was the workshop of the world and the West Midlands was the workshop of Britain. Now the East Midlands scrapes into the top 20.

"It was fashionable in the early days of Thatcherism to say that manufacturing did not matter. It does. The prosperity of Europe's regions is in direct relationship to their manufacturing base. The UK needs a sustained period of investment in its manufacturing industries to secure the country's future."

Figures from the European survey also show that British regions have the second highest percentage of part-time workers in Europe behind the Netherlands. The top four areas, all in Holland, vary from 35 per cent to 40 per cent.

Europe's top 20 manufacturing regions

	Region	% of workforce in manufacturing
1.	Baden-Wuerttemberg	43.3
2.	Lombardia	41.83
3.	Sachsen	39.79
4.	Thueringen	37.79
5.	Bayern	37.54
6.	Sachsen-Anhalt	37.27
7.	Nord Est	37.26
8.	Noreste	37.20
9.	Rheinland-Pfalz	36.97
10.	Nord Ovest	36.90
11.	Este	36.53
12.	Nordrhein-Westfalen	35.96
13.	Centro (I)	35.64
14.	Brandenburg	35.62
15.	East Midlands	35.39
16.	Westoesterreich	35.32
17.	Saarland	35.14
18.	Est	35.14
19.	Emilia-Romagna	35.06
20.	West Midlands	34.33

Source: Eurostat

Dutch insurer strikes record $3.5bn US deal

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Aegon, the Dutch insurer which owns Scottish Equitable, yesterday pulled off the largest life insurance acquisition in the US and the biggest ever by a Dutch firm when it struck a $3.5bn deal to buy Providian Corporation of the US.

The acquisition, which is expected to be concluded in the first half of the New Year, will increase the size of Aegon by 25 percent. It will almost double the size of the group's US earnings.

Providian Corporation is based in Louisville, Kentucky and consists of Providian Bancorp, a consumer lending organisation, and three insurance divisions – agency, direct insurance and capital management.

The three insurance operations will become part of Aegon USA, while Bancorp will be spun off to existing Providian shareholders immediately prior to the acquisition.

The deal involves a tax-free share swap under which Providian shareholders receive Aegon shares worth $2.62bn and Aegon USA takes over loans worth $780m and preferred stock worth $100m.

"This record-setting acquisition is fully in line with Aegon's stated strategy. It is earnings enhancing, highly compatible and will provide a healthy boost to our growth into the next century," said Kees Storm, chairman of Aegon.

Irving Bailey, chairman of Providian Corporation said: "The deal provides our insurance activities with a committed partner ... while freeing Providian Bancorp to develop its considerable potential as an independent consumer lending specialist."

"Our shareholders thus eod up with stakes in two strong and successful companies, each a fast growing leader in its respective field," Mr Bailey added.

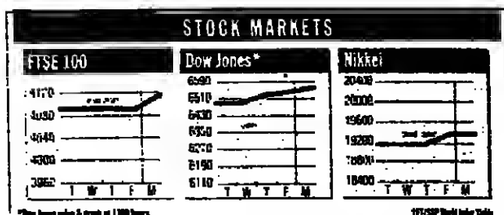
The deal comes at the end of a year which has seen rapid consolidation in the insurance industry world-wide.

The industry is facing fierce competition from new eotrants to the business, such as banks, as well as fighting rising costs.

In the UK, Royal and Sun Alliance merged earlier this year putting hundreds of jobs of risk.

Two French insurance companies, AXA and Union des Assuraoces de Paris, also announced merger plans in November to create the world's second-largest insurance company after Nippon Life of Japan.

STOCK MARKETS



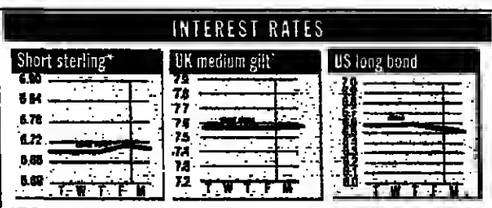
*New Jones values & graph at 1300 hours
1997 S&P Dealt Index Table

Indices

Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	4115.70	+24.70	+0.6	4115.70	3632.30	3.86
FTSE 250	4484.80	+14.30	+0.3	4568.60	4015.30	3.50
FTSE 350	2042.20	+11.10	+0.5	2042.20	1816.60	3.78
FTSE Small Cap	2176.79	+7.58	+0.3	2244.36	1954.06	3.28
FTSE All Share	2011.74	+10.58	+0.5	2011.74	1791.95	3.75
New York *	6580.90	+19.99	+0.3	6560.91	5032.94	2.02
Tokyo	19361.35	-7.69	-0.0	22666.80	19161.71	0.811
Hong Kong	13480.75	+76.61	+0.6	13530.95	10204.87	3.101
Frankfurt	2887.25	+34.97	+1.2	2909.91	2253.36	1.611

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES



* Mile Stock futures contract
† Treasury 8% 2007

Money Market Rates

Index	1 Month	1 Year
UK	6.16	6.97
US	5.38	5.72
Japan	0.25	0.50
Germany	3.09	3.19

Bond Yields *

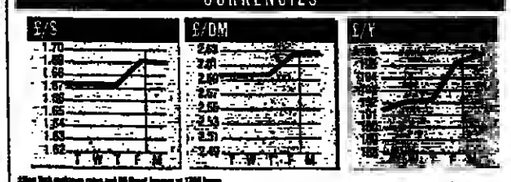
Medium Bond (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond	(%) Year Ago
7.51	7.42	7.59	7.57
6.28	5.61	6.52	5.99
-	2.90	-	-
5.79	6.03	6.68	6.85

*Benchmark indices

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Change (p)	Change%	Falls	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Biocompatibles Int	800	48.5	6.5	Willis Corroon Grp	139.5	3.5	2.4
Close Bros Group	336.5	16	5.0	Low & Bonar	408.5	7.5	1.8
Liberty Intl Hldgs	430	19.5	4.8	Nynex Cablecomms	109	2	1.6

CURRENCIES



*New York mornings rates and DM fixed January at 1300 hours

Pound

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
$ (London)	1.6902	-0.14c	1.5845
$ (N York)‡	1.6910	+1.90c	1.5510
DM (London)	2.6311	+0.030l	2.2222
¥ (London)	195.860	+Y0.598	160.153
£ Index	95.6	unch	83.1

Dollar

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
£ (London)	0.5916	+0.04	0.6441
£ (N York)‡	0.5914	-0.67	0.6447
DM (London)	1.5567	+0.15pf	1.4313
¥ (London)	115.880	+Y0.45	103.155
$ Index	98.8	+0.1	94.0

OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago		Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Rlse
Oil Brent $	23.82	+0.05	18.33	RPI	153.9	+2.7pc	149.8	18 Jan
Gold $	369.40	-0.15	387.05	GDP	108.9	+2.3pc	105.7	27 Jan
Gold £	216.55	+0.41	249.30	Base Rates	—	6.00pc	6.75	---

COMMENT

Remoteness that characterised a sad decline

Lord Weinstock bas cbosen the medium of the *Financial Times* for a long and reflective series of mterviews to mark his departure from GEC after 33 years at the helm – well, near departure anyway, for he retains the curious title of honorary chairman emeritus. There's not mucb in there that's going to surprise close observers of this clever and resilient industrialist, except perbaps this – the admission that he never visits factories. Lord Weinstock justifies this extraordinary omission on the basis that if he visited one plant every half-day, he could not get round all GEC's plants in a year. The effect would be minimal anyway, he elaims, since people would know be wouldn't be back for quite a while.

Perhaps Lord Weinstock is just being a little more honest than his peers in disclosing this apparent lapse. Most busy executives rarely have time to visit the factory floor. Certain of them have actually made a virtue of it. Lord White, the late ebairman of Hanson America, liked to boast that in all his years at Hanson he had never visited any of the businesses be controlled. Indeed be would have regarded it as a failure to have done so, for to visit a business is only to allow yourself to be polluted by excuses as to wby things cannot be done. Much better, be always used to say, just to set a target and bold management to it.

Though he wouldn't put it in quite that way, this was plainly Lord Weinstock's way too. He ran his company via a book of numbers, a set of "ratios and statistics". As a way of keeping his company out of financial danger, and of delivering solid, if unspectacular, value to shareholders, it plainly worked. But there is also arrogance and a certain bankruptcy of leadership in a managing director who thinks it not necessary to visit his places of production. Sueh management remoteness from the workplace may not bave been a cause of Britain's post-war industrial decline, but it certainly seems reasonable to see it as symptomatic.

Of course it is not possible for a man in Lord Weinstock's position to get round all his factories. But to visit none? The secret of good management in a large group of companies is not so very different from that of a small company, most successful entrepreneurs will tell you. It is to be involved with tbe product and the people who make it and sell it, to demand the impossible and to instill in employees that sense of enthusiasm and purpose that helps them meet those demands. Is that really possible from a darkened room in Stanhope Gate? Of course it isn't. Let's hope George Simpson, Lord Weinstock's successor, visits a few more factories.

When Martin Sorrell's breath-takingly rich pay package at WPP was finally approved in June last year, after some adjustment by outraged institutional shareholders, the company said it was very unlikely the full amount would ever be paid. The targets were just too demanding, said both Mr Sorrell and the chairman of the remuneration eommittee.

One and a half years later and they don't look quite so demanding. The WPP sbare price topped 250p yesterday, well above the 230p target price that delivers Mr Sorrell his £3.6m initial payout, not counting bis already princely salary, bonuses, pensions and the like. Sure, the shares have to maintain their target levels for 60 consecutive days, and yes, the company must outperform the market, but both requirements look witbin reach.

Mr Sorrell has to hit 265p to get the next tranche of shares and then 304p by September 1999 to get the full whack of about £27m, of which £14m at least will be in the form of free shares.

Will be go all the way? Analysts are beginning to think so. Advertising spend was up by between 6 and 7 per cent in 1996, but WPP, following Mr Sorrell's restructuring efforts, saw its revenues climb by nearly 9 per cent per cent and margins widen to more than 10 per cent. Pre-tax profits should grow to £185m next year. If investors were willing to give WPP the same measure of support they award to the sector leader, Abbott Mead Vickers – which trades on more than 20 times next year's earnings – the shares would already be high enough for Mr Sorrell to get the full paekage.

That the sbares are still on a rather subdued 16 times earnings is a measure of the City's caution at backing Mr Sorrell a second time. He's already lost one fortune. Many are still furious that be's been given the chance to rebase and make bimself a packet merely by returning tbe company to where it once was. To be fair on Mr Sorrell, he has managed, through some energetie cost cutting and some excellent client prospecting work to get the show back on the road.

There is still a chance the shares will continue to underperform, depriving Mr Sorrell of bis pile. But with two pretty decent years for the economy and advertising ahead of him, and witb most analysts projecting better-than-average growth at WPP, the chances be will see his way into the serious money bave to be rated as reasonably good and getting better. If tbese are tough targets, it makes you wonder about the softer ones enshrined in many an executive long term incentive plan.

News that Russia is set to sign a deal with tbe Central Selling Organisation will be met with sceptieism by De Beers, the South African minerals giant wbich controls tbe diamond sales cartel. The last agreement between Russia's biggest diamond producer and the South Africans ran out a year ago and the negotiations to renew it ended in the autumn. Today's already twice-extended deadline for a new deal is almost certain to be breached.

Both sides claim to have been suffering from the ragged end to tbe old arrangements. De Beers has complained bitterly of the "leakage" of Russian rough diamonds, nominally intended for domestic use, onto international markets. The result has been to blow a hole in tbe CSO's dominanee of the world diamond "market".

Not tbat it shows. Last year set another record for worldwide diamond sales, which rose 7 per cent to $4.83bn. Prices have also been rising, despite Russia. De Beers managed a 3 per cent rise on average in July.

Is the CSO a bad thing? The European Commission appears to be able to live witb it, even if the Americans cannot. The truth is, however, that its partial breach seems to have done De Beers little harm. It might even persuade the company to step up its marketing efforts. Spurred by the cessation of bostilities in the Middle East, the company mounted its first advertising eampaign in tbe Gulf earlier this year, while the Pacific Rim represents a vast and as yet under-exploited potential market. It may be that a dose of free market competition from the Russians would do everyone some good.

Malaysia on course to realise a dream with millionth Proton car

Stephen Vines
Singapore

Malaysian prime minister Mabathir Mohamad's dream of creating a world-class industry took a step forward yesterday when be presided over a ceremony marking the production of *the millionth* Proton car.

The landmark event came after 11 years of manufacture and was celebrated as something of a national achievement. Proton has ambitious plans to export 40 per cent of its output.

At present, however, only tbe British market has sbown real enthusiasm for the low-priced, high-specification Proton range, which is based on models developed by its Japanese partner, the Mitsubishi Motor Corporation.

In October Proton made a large investment in improving its technology by spending £51m to acquire the Lotus Group which makes sports cars but also gives Proton access to engine and transmission technology wbicb it has been buying in from Japan

The relationship between the state-controlled company which owns Proton, and its Japanese partner has been far from smooth. At one point Mitsubishi executives were so exasperated by the local management that they virtually took control of the whole project despite the fact that it was supposed to be a Malaysian flag-waving exercise

Relations have since improved but there is lingering resentment in Malaysia about the Japanese company's reluctance to transfer technology. This was particularly disillusioning for the prime minister wbo was then advocating a "Look East" policy to learn from Japan rather than the West.

Dr Mahathir is, to put it mildly, a car enthusiast. He steam-rollered the plan to establisb the Proton company, to create Malaysia's national car programme, against considerable scepticism from the motor industry.

The first Proton Sagas were indeed little more than locally assembled Mitsubishi models but local content has increased significantly and a higher level of local design has been incorporated in more recent models.

However, the development of Proton has taken a heavy toll on the rest of the Malaysian car industry because it enjoys a preferential customs duties regime, making Protons far cbeaper than rival locally assembled cars.

A second national car programme has been launcbed to produce compact models. This too poses a threat to other parts of the local industry.

However, next year the tariffs on other models will have to be reduced if Malaysia is to comply with international trade agreements.

This means that Proton will need to reduce costs if it intends to maintain its policy of competing on price. Dr Mahathir called on Mitsubishi to reduce the cost of components and other supplies to belp in this objective

Proton announced yesterday that it plans to turo out 2 million cars in five years' time.

Annual production will be increased from 180,000 to 230,000 by the end of next year.

The national car programmes were seen by the government as part of a strategy to upgrade Malaysian industry.

Dr Mahathir said that they had demonstrated their ability in this respect because their output demonstrated that Malaysian workers were able to produce cars comparable in quality to those sold in demanding markets such as the United Kingdom.

Into an elite club: Proton joins some of the other famous models to have rolled a million on the production line (clockwise from top: the Proton, Mini, Morris-Minor, VW Beetle)

Bumper £10bn new issues for London market

Magnus Grimond

Last year saw a bumper £10.12bn of new issues on the London stock market, hut this year could be trickier, according to a survey published yesterday. KPMG Corporate Finance is forecasting that there will be a rush of companies hoping to float in the next three months to beat the uncertainty caused by the general election.

Thereafter tbe flood is likely to be temporarily staunched by the political uncertainty surrounding the poll, while valuations could be hit by a correction on Wall Street, the accountants warn.

Last year's figure compares with just £2.61bn in 1995, but just failed to beat the record £10.14bn achieved in 1994. In all there were 119 new issues in 1996, up from 86 the previous year, but little more than half the 218 in 1994.

KPMG's Neil Austin says the rot set in in the autumn. "I think things had been simmering for a while and the trigger was the fall in the US market, wbicb caused three floats to be pulled. If things bad been going well, that wouldn't have had the same effect."

Pub group Discovery Inns, Wise Speke, the stockbrokers and the sell-off of certain engineering businesses from Morgan Crucible all announced the cancellation or postponement of flotation plans during December.

"I think people had been going cool on new issues since the autumn and that coolness tben turned to uncertainty, causing people to become more choosy."

But Mr Austin said tbe conditions remained ripe for the market. Companies would want to get in before the election, which has to be called before the summer. Also, institutions' cash piles have been boosted by recent takeovers. And the growth rates of the smaller companies' wbicb dominate the new issues market will look attractive against lower rates from larger companies.

There is then likely to be a hiatus before the summer, with stronger activity picking up in the autumn, he forecasts, fuelled by the good economic outlook in the UK.

Overseas factors, particularly the level of the US market, could hit valuations, hut should not result in issues being pulled, be expects.

The average value of flotations shot up to £85m from £30m last year, led by the likes of Orange, the mobile telephone group, British Energy, the nuclear generating group, and Railtrack, owner of Britain's railway tracks.

Separately, the Centre of Management Buy-Out Research said tbat buy-outs and buy-ins hit a record £7.5bn during 1996, some £51m more than in the previous record year of 1989. The latest figure is 39 per cent up on the 1995 buy-out market.

Separately, Britain's buy-out market reached a record £7.5bn in 1996, up 39 per cent from last year, according to a study released on Monday.

Irish threat to Bupa plans

Nic Cicutti

Plans by Bupa, the healthcare provider, to grab a slice of tbe £300m health insurance market in the Republic of Ireland could be dealt a critical blow by the Irish Government, which claims its schemes fall foul of the law.

The refusal of the Republic's Department of Health, which regulates the market, to authorise Bupa's launch on New Year's Day would deal a severe blow to the insurer's bid to expand at a time of difficult trading conditions in the UK.

Bupa currently has a 45 per cent share of tbe private health insurance market in the UK, worth about £1bn in premium income each year. Its market share has declined steadily from a high point of about 70 per cent over 15 years ago.

The row in Ireland concerns the UK insurer's lans to mount an assault on the near-monopoly enjoyed until recently by the Voluntary Health Insurance Board (VHI), wbich is part-owned by the Irish state.

VHI policies cover 1.4 million people, almost 40 per cent of the total population, compared to just 11 per cent of UK residents with similar cover.

The policies are structured so that one can buy varying levels of cover, with the vast majority of people ehoosing an option which allows them some sort of care in a private hospital, or private care in the state system.

A recent Health Insurance Act allows competition to VHI, as long as all age groups pay the same premiums for their cover. The aim is not to allow "cherry-picking" of healtby policyholders, leaving the rest to pay more.

Bupa's plan competes with VHI by offering a very basic minimum insurance cover. Its more popular options pay cash to people needing hospital treatment rather than paying for it on their behalf. Bupa believes this allows it to avoid the Health Insurance Act. These options are age-related.

But a Department of Health statement said: "The effect of such a paekage may be to contravene the definition of a health insurance contract, as set out in the Act."

Tony McSweeney, sales and marketing director at VHI, said: "We welcome competition. But we bave obtained legal opinion that Bupa's plans are not lawful as tbey stand."

He added that VHI reserved the right to take legal action in a bid to block Bupa if the Government gives the schemes its go-ahead.

IN BRIEF

• **The top building societies** are virtually unanimous in forecasting a further rise of 7-8 per cent in average UK property prices in 1997. Yesterday Birmingham & Midshires said house prices are set to climb by 8 per cent this year, adding £5,000 to an average £65,0000 property. Last week Nationwide forecast a 7 per cent rise next year, much the same as in 1996. The Halifax is tipping 7-8 per cent in 1997 and again in 1998. But chief executive at Birmingham & Midshires, Mike Jackson, warns that forecasters looking for a 10 to 15 per cent increase are overly optimistic. Uncertainties caused by the general election and fears of further interest rate rises will "keep the recovery steady", be claims.

• **Greggs, the bakery retailer**, is paying £3.2m for Birketts, the Cumbrian based baker wbieh has 57 shops. Birketts made profits of £332,000 last year on sales of £11m. The deal expands Greggs' coverage beyond its core region of Newcastle, Glasgow and Mancbester.

• **Littlewoods, the retail and football** pools empire, has acquired the scratch card group, UK Charity Lotteries, for an undisclosed sum. Littlewoods said UK Charity Lotteries' "Lucky" scratcb-card products would he added to its existing portfolio of lottery products. Littlewoods said the deal would give its lottery business a turnover of £70m. The group said its business would represent "a serious alternative" to Camelot, which operates the National Lottery.

• **The drop in the annual rate of business failures** in Britain has dried up according to figures for 1996 from Dun & Bradstreet released today. Nearly 800 businesses are failing each week. There were 41,107 liquidations and personal bankruptcies during the year compared with 41,303 in 1995 – a drop of of less than 0.5 per cent. Falls had been much steeper previously – 11.2 per cent in 1993 and 21.9 per cent in 1994. There are big geographical contrasts, however, as London continues to rebound from the recession. Business failures in London dropped by 15.4 per cent, compared with the East Midlands where failures rose by 17.6 per cent.

• **Shareholders in T&N yesterday approved** an EGM resolution relating to the provision for its asbestos-related disease costs. The group announced last month that it would make a £373m provision this year to limit its potential liabilities relating to future asbestos related claims.

• **James Fisher has sold its 50 per cent** sbare in Vectis Shipping to joint venture partner Carisbrooke Shipping for £719,000. Vectis was formed in 1993 and operates two short sea freight vessels. Vectis made profits of £232,000 last year but has been hit by poor trading in 1996.

Carlton and CableTel to seek licences to operate digital terrestial TV services

Mathew Horsman
Media Editor

Carlton Communications, Michael Green's media group, and International CableTel, the cable operator, plan to bid for licences to operate digital terrestrial television services, *The Independent* has learned.

The two media companies are in talks with programmers, including US-controlled Flextech, the pay-TV packager, to reach preliminary carriage agreements prior to the 31 January deadline for DTT applications.

The programming talks, which are at an early stage, could see Flextech's joint venture channels with the BBC made exclusively to either Carlton or CableTel, although Flextech is believed to have reserviced the right to offer the channels for broadcast on other digital platforms.

It is understood that at least four channels are being offered by Flextech/BBC – Horizons, Showcase, Style and One-TV, the pop music channel, at a suggested cost of 75p each per subscriber. If either Carlton or CableTel want an additional channel, possible Arena/Learning, another joint venture with the BBC, the price would drop to 68p.

Flextech is understood to be prepared to strike a similar deal for satellite broadcasters, and has held preliminary talks with BSkyB, the satellite pay-TV giant, about offering the channels for satellite distribution.

Flextech and the BBC are believed to be open to an exclusive DTT and digital cable distribution deal, but the price per subscriber would have to be much higher, it is understood.

Flextech may also seek a deal to distribute two US channels on DTT, in league with Universal and Warner, the Hollywood studios. That possibility is being discussed by Flextech's parent, US cable giant TCI, and Time-Warner, in New York.

Meanwhile, it emerged that the BBC and Flextech, which plan to launch as many as eight pay-TV channels together, are considering a film channel based on the BBC's library of quality made-for-TV films.

DTT, which is scheduled for launch in mid-1998, would boast as many as 30 channels.

Carlton is expected to bid for all three commercial DTT multiplexes, and is the only ITV company to have made the commitment. Two of the remaining multiplexes are reserved for ITV, Channel 4 and the BBC, while the last is available to commercial bidders provided they agree to carry Channel 5 and S4C, the Welsh-language channel. These services will feature "simulcasts" of existing terrestrial channels, as well as additional services.

International CableTel, which owns the transmission company NTL, is understood to be attracted by the prospects for supplying transmission services, and is also expected to bid for the three available commercial multiplexes.

Barings defies critics by topping M&A league

Jil Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Barings, the bank which was driven to collapse in 1995 by Nick Leeson, has defied its critics and stayed at the top of the league table of mergers and acquisitions advisory work for the second year running.

The bank, wbicb was bought by ING, the Dutch financial services group, achieved this position in a year which bas been highly lucrative for corporate financiers.

A record £1.1bn in fees was generated overall, as were humper bonuses to staff, according to *Acquisitions Monthly*, the trade magazine.

During 1996 Barings worked on 31 deals worth £11.8bn and 11 of tbese were public takeovers worth £9.3bn.

The largest mandate was to advise Royal Insurance on its £2.4bn merger with Sun Alliance.

"This proves to the market that the excellent sbow Barings made in 1995 was not just a flash in the pan. The bank really is a force to be reckoned with," said Philip Healey, editor of Acquisitions Monthly.

Second in the league table is Lazard Brothers which benefitted from its expertise in hostile bids. The Lazards team advised Granada on its £3.6bn hostile takeover of Forte and Rentokil on its £2.1bn bid for BET.

SBC Warburg, third in the table, was one of the beneficiaries of the £40m dished out by Forte in its desperate, but failed, attempt to avoid Granada's grasp. The bank retained its position in the table despite a wave of defections after the merger between Swiss Bank Corporation and Warburg's last year.

As business boomed during tbe year, fuelled in part by race to merge ahead of the general election, so did the hiring spree and compensation packages offer.

Merrill Lynch, the US financial firm, hired Guy Dawson from Deutsche Morgan Grenfell and as a result was catapulted into tbe Acquistions Monthly top 10.

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, in contrast, slid from eighth to 14th.

Bill Harrison was tempted to BZW, the investment banking arm of Barclays, from Robert Fleming, on a pay deal worth close to £6.0m over five years. George Magan, the veteran corporate financier, sold his business, Hambro Magan, to NatWest Markets in a deal which was rumoured to have created as many as 100 millionaires.

In the race to find mergers and acquisitions experts, many professionals were offered guaranteed bonuses because they were bired during the financial year and not, as is more traditional, at year-end once their bonuses have been paid out.

Top 10 M&A advisers

Adviser	Value £m
Baring Brothers (1)	11,789
Lazard Brothers (2)	11,096
SBC Warburg(3)	10,320
Schroders (7)	9,626
NM Rothschild (5)	9,348
Kleinwort Benson (9)	8,987
Hambros Bank (16)	7,825
UBS (20)	7,671
Merrill Lynch (-)	7,661
Goldman Sachs (10)	7,461

Acquistions Monthly

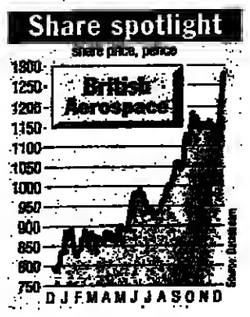
market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100
4115.7 + 24.7
FTSE 250
4484.8 + 14.3
FTSE 350
2042.2 + 11.1
SEAQ VOLUME
423.9m shares,
39,520 bargains
Gilts Index
94.47 -0.29

Share spotlight

share price, pence



Tipsters and window-dressing propel Footsie to record

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

It's surprising what a rush of New Year tips and a little year-end window dressing can do for the stock market. Footsie bounded to a peak, closing for the first time above 4,100 points.

Turnover, with many key operators still enjoying the festive holiday, was not high but those who reached their offices were, nevertheless, pleasantly surprise that volume was enough to make their journey worthwhile.

Such inhibitory influences as higher interest rates, the strength of sterling and political changes were conveniently forgotten. Footsie closed, after 3.9 points were stripped out for dividend payments, with a 24.7 gain to 4,115.7; the supporting 250 index rose 14.3 to 4,484.8, still more than 80 points below its peak hit in April.

What ever happens over the rest of the holiday period the market has, once again, managed to produce its traditional festive rally. There were, at one time, some doubts whether it would achieve what has become a regular feature of the investment calendar.

Yet since the Christmas season started Footsie has risen 125 points with the 250 index up more than 100 points.

Forecasts for next year remain generally positive with 4,600 seemingly the top of the range. Some strategists see Footsie riding at 5,500 by 2,000.

British Aerospace led the climb. It soared 50.5p to 1,276.5p. A range of stories swirled around. Suggestions it will benefit from signalled consolidation of the European defence industry and would lead the production of the new Airbus super jumbo encouraged buyers.

Pearson, largely on new year tips, gained 25.5p to 746.5p and BTR's recovery continued with a 7.5p gain to 281p.

After the near extinction of independent electricity companies during the year some are wondering whether next year it will be the turn of the privatised water operations to feel the heat of takeover action.

Anglian splashed 12.5p higher to 582.5p and **Thames** 4p to 610p. **Severn Trent**, stripped of a 13.13p dividend, ended 16.5p lower at 669.5p.

Two mixed electricity and water groups made headway: **Hyder** put on 10.5p to 736.5p and **United Utilities** 13.5p to 619.5p. Of the remaining electricity companies **Southern** gained 11p to 795p and **Yorkshire** held at 808.5p.

Storehouse, weak recently on negative comment, managed a 2p gain to 258p. There was vague talk of a trading deal with **Asda**, 1.5p firmer at 123.5p.

The debate over the performance of the retail groups over the holiday swung in favour of the optimists with Burton and Next among high street shares to move ahead.

BT almost mirrored a dividend payment. The shares were traded minus a 9.88p distribution and fell 9.5p to 395.5p.

Hardy Underwriting, a Lloyd's of London underwriter, made an impressive début. Placed at 145p the shares closed at 175p.

Biocompatibles International's astonishing run continued. Last year the shares were 151p. They hit an 800p peak with a 48.5p jump. The group, which makes special coatings for a range of medical devices including contact lens, is involved in a new style of heart stents – metal braces used to keep blood vessels open.

The stent market is said to be worth around $1bn a year and is growing fast. Johnson & Johnson, the US giant, is a significant shareholder in Biocompatibles and Kleinwort Benson recently forecast a break-even position by the end of next year and a £20m profit in the following year.

Among shares supported by weekend press tips were **Microvitec**, up 6p to 24.75p; **Hercules** 20p to 120p and **Old English Pub Co.** 25.5p to 210.5p. **Stanford Rook** rose 42.5p to 425p and **Whittard** 25p to 211.5p.

Emerald Energy continued to break out of its long-time 2p to 3p straight jacket. The shares put on 0.5p to 4p. National Westminster Bank disclosed a 14.08 per cent shareholding in the group, seeking oil in Colombia.

Eyecare Products' depressing decline continued with the shares off another 2p to a low of 13.5p. They were 51p in the spring. The slump was started by disappointing interim profits and then the company issued a warning that after tax profits for the year would be around £1m against analysts hopes nearer £3.5m.

The share performance must dismay Lantis, a US group, which took a 15 per cent stake in the maker of optical frames and sunglasses at 37.5p a share in November. Lantis has an option on a further 12.3 per cent at 57.5p.

Taking Stock

☐ **Parity, which has more than doubled this year, rose 22.5p to 437.5p. Speculation continues about benefits to be won from the computer millennium problem and the difficulties the arrival of European Monetary Union would create. Estimates for getting computers to recognise 2,000 have been put as high as £600bn but some expect around £30bn. Parity is seen as one house set for a bonanza. Reports Mercury Communications could face an £80m bill to update its computer systems for the next century prompted the latest gain. Stockbroker Killik & Co reckon are the shares are still a buy.**

☐ **Progress of Lanica Trust continues with a 225p gain to 1,575p. The shares were 56p before Andrew Regan's arrival in October. Hopes of mail order deals are the spur.**

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.
Other details: r Ex rights x Ex-dividend a Ex all u Unlisted Securities Market s Suspended pp Partly Paid pm Nil Paid Shares. ‡ AIM Stock
Source: FT Information

The Independent index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Simply dial 0891 123 333, and when prompted to do so, enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FTSE 100 – Real-time	00	Sterling Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	38
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Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpline 0171 873 4378 (9.00am - 5.00pm).

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000
ASDA Group	1980000	BTR	580000	Shell Transport	360000	British Airways	300000
Hanson	1650000	Lloyds TSB	580000	Burton	330000	Sears	300000
National Grid	1040000	British Steel	540000	General Elect	320000	Allied Domecq	280000
BT	960000	Blue Circle	490000	Lonrho	310000	GRE	280000
Vodafone	700000	British Gas	370000	Tomkins	310000	Cookson	280000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 4095.3 up 4.3
09.00 4101.1 up 10.1
10.00 4109.1 up 18.1
11.00 4109.9 up 18.9
12.00 4106.5 up 15.5
13.00 4109.9 up 18.9
14.00 4105.6 up 14.6
15.00 4104.9 up 13.9
16.00 4114.2 up 23.2
Close 4115.7 up 24.7

[illegible]

Government Securities

[illegible]

business

Someone you've not heard of cleans up the opposition

Tom Stevenson on James Dyson and the success of his revolutionary vacuum cleaner

James Dyson may be the most successful businessman you've never heard of, but his anonymity is likely to be short-lived. An award-winning designer, the revolutionary vacuum cleaner he launched only three years ago is taking Britain by storm and threatening to make Dyson as familiar a household name as Hoover itself.

He has looked bankruptcy in the eye on many occasions, faced down the wrath of the giant corporations that dominate the electrical appliance industry and which ridiculed his invention, fought off international conspiracies to plagiarise his designs, and come out on top.

With not a shred of assistance from the venture capitalists you might have thought were set up to fund just his sort of business, James Dyson has built up a company turning over £100m a year and tripling in size every 12 months.

And because of the brick wall he came up against in funding his crazy dream, he owns the lot. A former Royal College of Art student, he is the sole beneficiary of a company with ambitions to dominate the household appliances market in the UK and, who knows, around the world.

The Dual Cyclone vacuum cleaner is not Mr Dyson's first familiar invention. He was behind the odd-looking ball-barrow that for a while dominated the wheelbarrow market. But it is the most lucrative and certainly the most improbable. As one early critic wrongly pointed out, "*If this is so much* better how come Hoover hasn't invented it already."

That Mr Dyson's machine is so much better than its rivals is proved by the chart below, showing how it has come from nowhere to dominate its market in only three years. Half-a-million consumers this year have been prepared to shell out more than twice as much as *they would have had to pay for* a rival cleaner.

Like most successful inventions, the principle is simple. By filtering dust in a funnel of air spinning at up to 900 miles per hour, Mr Dyson has dispensed with the paper bags that other cleaners use to catch the filth but which clog up in a matter of minutes. It is estimated that a traditional cleaner loses half its suction after cleaning just one room – the Dyson remains 100 per cent efficient indefinitely.

The most remarkable thing about the Dual Cyclone, however, is not its technology but the fact that it exists at all, given the decade long struggle Mr Dyson had to raise the funds he needed to bring it to market. Having sunk £4.5m of his own money into the project, largely earned from overseas licensing of his patented design, the last £1m to bring the Dual Cyclone to market should have been a stroll. It proved impossible, however, to raise this *relatively modest sum in the private equity markets.*

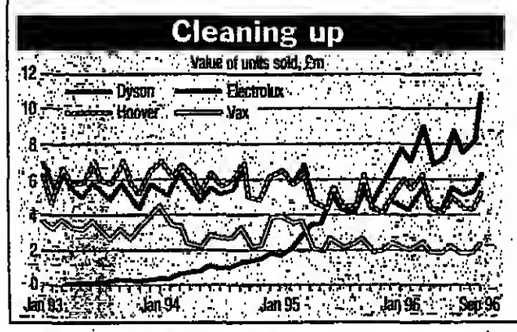
"You're just a designer, they said; get a professional manager from the industry and we'll back you." Mr Dyson ruefully recalls. "But I thought: this is my show and I'm going to run it." Only a believer at Lloyds Bank, who overturned an original refusal to lend, allowed the cleaner to reach the shops at all.

"It's clear they were not backing me partly because I was a designer but also because they are not interested in backing new technology" says Dyson. "Of course I'm eternally grateful to people for not giving me any *money because now I own* 100 per cent of the business."

The growth of that business has been prodigious. Launched in March 1993, sales reached £3m in the first year, £10m the following, quadrupled to £40m in 1995, from which Dyson netted an £8m profit, and are forecast to reach a staggering £100m this year.

As the chart shows, during that time Dyson has left its competitors standing. Partly thanks to its £199 price tag the Dyson dominates the market by value. In unit terms too it is poised to overtake Electrolux.

The challenge for the company now is to manage this exponential growth without becoming just the sort of complacent, bloated multinational it has had to fight along the way. For now the art student ethos lives on and Dyson refuses to allow anyone to wear a suit to work: "People use them as a shield. They think 'everything I say will carry weight because I'm wearing a suit and therefore I'm a serious businessman.' I want people to behave like human beings."



Humbug! Trust an accountant to spoil the seasonal festivities

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Scrooge is alive and well. Trust the accountants to spoil the Christmas fun. **David Harrison**, national tax director of Kidsons Impey, is advising companies to rein in their spending on office parties.

Mr Harrison warns that employees may be nursing unforeseen tax bills as well as sore heads if their employers exceed the tax allowance of £75 per individual for festive entertainment.

Mr Harrison says: "Employers must plan carefully to avoid exceeding the £75 limit. This is a cumulative total for the whole tax year and includes the cost of VAT and any transportation." So taxis home are subject to that tax man's eagle eye, as well as the usual bubbly and canapes.

According to Mr Harrison, if the employee's tax free benefit is broken, then *the total benefit – including* the £75 – is assessable "on every employee attending the functions".

The pain will show up on the employees' tax liability in April, he adds. "Employers should check the cumulative totals and, if there is any danger of exceeding the limits, consider a small recharge of some of the cost to avoid liability to tax."

"A small recharge," eh? Worse is to come. Mr Harrison concludes: "If you are planning another company function in the spring, make sure that it is held after 6 April, the beginning of the new tax year."

Bah, humbug.

Alive and well: Scrooge, the notorious party-pooper, has reared his head again

Travelling to work in London at the moment is a hallucinatory experience, what with empty roads, uncrowded tubes and plenty of empty busses whizzing around. The City seems to have taken this recent idea of the two-week holiday over Christmas and new year to heart. Hardly any of the businessmen on the New Years' Honours list were at work. Or to be fair, not in the office, anyway.

Raj Kumar Bagri, CBE, chairman, London Metal Exchange and chairman of brokers MetDist, rang me from Bali to comment on his life peerage.

1996 must surely have been the "annus horribilis" of the LME, I suggested, what with the Hamanaka copper scandal in which a Sumitomo broker was revealed to have run of billions of yen in losses.

Mr Bagri would have none of this: "Sumitomo is not a member of the LME. It is not governed by the rules and regulations of the LME.

"You can ask anyone anywhere – there is no antidote to rogue traders. Look what happened to Daiwa in the US, look at what Nick Leeson did in Singapore.

All we can do is strengthen our regulations and laws. There is nothing markets can do to stop these kinds of forays.

It's up to the companies and their own internal controls. We can't act as policemen in peoples' own offices."

So there we are. As Mr Bagri says himself, he has always been " a very no-nonsense chairman of the LME".

As for his life peerage, he says: "I feel greatly honoured and feel a great deal of humility. This will be a great encouragement to Asian businessmen in the UK and to other ethnic communities. They will see there are no barriers to reaching the top."

As for other businessmen honoured, **Bob Horton** of Railtrack was "out with relatives – but obviously delighted with his knighthood", a Railtrack spokesman tells me.

No one was in at John Laing, so nobody could comment on chairman **John Laing's** knighthood. The same goes for the London Docklands Development Corporation, whose chairman **John Pickard**, a former head of the Sears stores group, also received a knighthood. "No one is in till Thursday," an LDDC security guard informs me.

David Potter, chairman and chief executive, Psion, received a CBE "for services to the manufacturing industry", but when I rang Psion I was told that "nobody's in – although you could contact Mr Potter tomorrow via his secretary".

Meanwhile **David Rowland**, chairman of Lloyd's of London, heard about his knighthood while on holiday in New Zealand. There again, he has an excellent case for a break, having steered the debt-laden insurance market successfully through its £3.2bn restructuring.

Last but not least, **Peter Davis**, chief executive of the Prudential, rang me from his home to say how delighted he was at his knighthood for services to training and industry. "I'm just doing the washing up as my wife's got flu," he explained. Bravo.

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Sterling Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark Spot
US	1.8902	11-9	38-36	1.000	—	—	0.6424
Canada	2.3125	54-48	164-156	1.3682	24-23	75-73	0.8789
Germany	2.8311	69-61	208-193	1.5567	30-28	90-87	1.0000
France	8.8721	217-198	640-606	5.2495	86-81	269-258	3.3718
Italy	2584.0	31-45	103-123	1529.18	28-35	81-101	982.071
Japan	185.86	95-91	281-276	110.88	48-47	149-147	71.4395
ECU	1.3629	21-18	66-61	1.2402	13-14	44-45	0.5180
Belgium	54.209	15-10	42-36	32.073	7-5	20-17	20.6029
Denmark	10.067	222-177	655-556	5.9563	99-79	298-247	3.8262
Netherlands	2.9525	82-74	240-226	1.7469	39-37	121-115	1.1221
Ireland	1.0106	5-1	16-10	1.6725	6-3	10-6	0.3841
Norway	10.907	160-90	380-270	6.4532	50-25	119-69	4.1454
Spain	22.167	3-13	5-13	13.115	8-12	23-31	84.2487
Sweden	11.627	220-180	690-580	6.8793	41-16	152-101	4.4181
Switzerland	2.2826	85-76	239-226	1.3505	40-37	119-114	0.8675
Australia	2.0239	10-16	15-25	1.2565	14-18	33-35	0.8072
Hong Kong	13.076	93-52	240-183	7.7365	2-0	2-7	4.9696
Malaysia	4.2723	0-0	0-0	2.5277	27-30	80-85	1.6238
New Zealand*	2.3935	64-71	155-168	1.4161	54-56	97-99	0.9097
Saudi Arabia	6.3390	0-0	0-0	3.7505	1-4	5-9	2.4082
Singapore	2.3658	0-0	0-0	1.3997	24-19	70-65	0.8991

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.8905	0.9999	Nigeria	133.903	79.2000
Austria	18.5141	10.9538	Oman	0.6509	0.3850
Brazil	1.7566	1.0390	Pakistan	67.7631	40.0799
China	14.0296	8.2982	Philippines	44.5330	26.3400
Egypt	5.7536	3.4051	Portugal	264.871	156.710
Finland	7.8700	4.6549	Qatar	6.5222	3.8640
Ghana	291.473	172.500	Russia	9422.27	5573.00
Greece	491.245	242.390	South Africa	7.9159	4.6820
India	60.7120	35.9200	Taiwan	46.5281	27.5200
Kuwait	0.5077	0.3003	UAE	6.9099	3.6730

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount: subtract from spot rate
rate quoted low to high are at a premium: add to spot rate
*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals.
For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033.
Calls cost 50p per minute (*day rate*) 45p other times.

Interest Rates

UK Base	6.00%	Germany Discount	2.50%	US Prime	8.25%	Japan Discount	0.50%
France Intervention	3.35%	Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Belgium Discount	2.50%
Italy Discount	7.5%	Canada Prime	4.75%	Fed Funds	5.25%	Central Switzerland	3.00%
Netherlands Advances	2.50%	Denmark Discount	3.25%	10-Day Repo Sweden Repo (Ave)	6.25% 4.00%	Discount	1.00%

Bond Yields

HSBC Markets Research

Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	7%	7.27	7¼%	7.52	Netherlands	8¼%	4.85	6.0%	5.58
US	5⅞%	6.07	6.50%	6.27	Spain	8.40%	5.91	8.80%	6.84
Japan	5.5%	1.83	3%	2.41	Italy	8.25%	6.71	6¼%	7.59
Australia	9⅞%	7.05	10%	7.43	Belgium	5%	4.52	7%	5.67
Germany	6.25%	4.85	6.25%	5.77	Sweden	13%	5.50	8.0%	6.70
France	7.0%	4.62	6.5%	5.72	ECU OAT*	8%	4.80	7%	6.06

Yields calculated on local bonds. *new benchmark

Money Market Rates

	O'Night	7 Day	1 Month	3	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	3 6	5⅝ 6¼	6⅛ 6¼	6⅛ 6⅛	6⅛ 6¼	6⅛ 7⅛
Sterling CDs	-	-	6⅛	6⅛	6⅛	6⅞
Local Authority Deps	5⅝	5⅝	6⅛	6⅛	6⅛	6⅛
Discount Market Deps	6¼	6¼	-	-	-	-
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-	-	5⅝	6⅛	-	-
Dollar CDs	-	-	5.08	5.14	5.18	5.34
ECU Linked Dep	-	-	4¼ 4⅛	4⅛ 4⅛	4⅛ 4⅛	4⅛ 4⅛

Tourist Rates

£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
Australia(Dollars)	2.0425	France(Francs)	8.5230	New Zealand(Dollars)	2.3125
Austria(Schillings)	17.8100	Germany(Marks)	2.8325	Norway(Kroner)	10.5775
Belgium(Francs)	52.1100	Greece(Drachma)	405.7500	Portugal(Escudos)	255.8500
Canada(Dollars)	2.2340	Hong Kong(Dollars)	12.5800	Spain(Pesetas)	213.2500
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.7640	Ireland(Punts)	0.9805	Sweden(Kronor)	13.3150
Denmark(Kroner)	9.7225	Italy(Lira)	2510.0000	Switzerland(Francs)	2.1840
Holland(Guilders)	2.8450	Japan(Yen)	190.4000	Turkey(Lira)	1737200.0000
Finland(Marks)	7.7100	Malta(Lira)	0.5885	United States(Dollars)	1.8400

Liffe Financial Futures

as at 27/12/96

Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day		Est Contls traded	Open Interest
Long Gilt	96	110-27	110-22	110-18	97	3261
German Gvt Bd	97	100.72	100.74	100.56	3622	220320
Italian Bond	97	128.50	128.49	127.95	2872	88349
Japan Gvt Bd	97	125.67	125.67	125.56	331	n/a
3 Mth Sterling	97	93.31	93.31	93.23	9262	97915
3 Mth Euromark	97	93.08	93.08	93.04	1520	87151
	97	96.86	96.87	96.86	6075	210548
3 Mth Eurolira	97	96.81	96.82	96.79	1262	170397
	97	93.46	93.49	93.43	5624	95225
3 Mth Euryen	97	93.85	93.88	93.79	1490	53919
3 Mth Eurolira	97	99.40			0	n/a
3 Mth Euroliras	97	98.15	98.16	98.10	1992	44549
	97	98.07	98.07	98.03	308	16290
3 Mth ECU	97	95.57	95.57	95.56	840	9805
	97	95.96	95.96	95.96	30	4548
FTSE 100	97	4080.0	4091.0	4081.0	1398	53415
FTSE 250	97	4514.0			0	4820

Liffe FTSE Index Option

Settlement price: 4114.00 closing offer price Call/Put

Series	4050	4100	4150	4200	Total/vols
Jan	87/14	49/27	22/51	8/89	- -
Feb	123/36	89/52	59/73	38/102	- -
Mar	141/62	108/79	80/102	57/130	- -
Apr	159/80	127/98	102/123	77/147	- -

Energy

Brent Crude (£/barrel) FE 5.30pm		*chg Yr ago	Gas oil ($/tonne) IPE close	*chg	WTI 6pm		Products † Spot CIF NW Europe	($/tonne)
Feb	23.74	+0.29	Jan	22.00	+0.60	Feb	25.35	Prem.Unleaded 223/228
Mar	23.18	+0.34	Feb	21.80	+2.50	Mar	24.70	Naphtha 217/220
Apr	22.60	+0.23	Mar	20.75	+1.75	Apr	24.05	EC Gasoil 227/228
Vol: 15793	Index: 23.51		Vol:	11480		May	23.40	Heavy Fuel Oil 112/114

*since 5.30pm previous day. Year ago price: average for week. Source: ICIS-London Oil Reports. †Spot prices

Commodity Indices

	Base date	+/-Spot	%chg Day	31 Dec	%chg YTD	Year ago	%chg Yr
Index	1970=100	218.11	-2.09	203.50	+8.20	206.79	+4.51
Agricultural	1970=100	234.01	-0.42	261.75	-16.95	277.55	-15.78
Energy	1963=100	88.17	-3.19	71.31	+23.63	73.73	+19.57
Indust'l Metals	1977=100	169.31	-0.54	183.52	-12.42	184.85	-13.11
Livestock	1970=100	189.12	+0.16	182.71	+3.51	184.23	+2.66
Precious Metals	1973=100	466.49	-0.03	488.56	-4.77	490.02	-4.80

GSCI Indices

†Close as of 27 Dec '96

Industrial Metals

London Metal Exchange

	$/tonne Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks		chg
Aluminium HG	1515-135	1542-4	33722	949975	+	6350
Aluminium Alloy	1360-5	1387-90	1010	74100	+	400
Copper A	2218-23	2126-8	38568	117450	+	2075
Lead	6945-55	6965-90	8381	119350	-	3275
Nickel	6305-15	6405-10	14908	43398	+	480
Tin	5690-90	5740-50	2311	10470	+	680
Zinc	1048.5-85	1068-9	22409	515273	+	1275

Settlement Conversion exchange rates. £/$ 1.6891 $/Dm 1.5566 $/¥ 115.99

Stock volumes & change in tonnes as at Fri 20 Dec '96

Precious Metals

Spink & Son

per fine oz	$	£	Coins	$	£		$	£
Platinum	369.50	218.45	Britannia	391	231	Krugrands	389/391	218/225
Palladium	118.50	88.85	Britannia 5 oz	198	117	Sovs	88/96	51/57
Silver spot	452.00	269.50	Britannia 25 oz	101	60	Nobles	384/391	215/225
Gold Bullin	389.25	218.36	Britannia 10 oz	54	32	Maple Leaf	378/391	221.231

Agricultural

as at 27/12/96 CMS

Cocoa LIFFE	£/tonne	Coffee LIFFE	£/tonne	Barley LIFFE	£/tonne	Potatoes LIFFE	£/tonne	Potatoes ATA	Gld 100kg
Dec	880	Jan	1280	Jan	94.50	Mar	53.50	-	-
Mar	900	Mar	1235	Mar	98.25	Apr	63.50	Feb	22.80
May	919	May	1201	May	98.00	May	65.50	Apr	12.50
Vol:	2390	Vol:	1917	Vol:	61	Vol:	4	Vol:	81

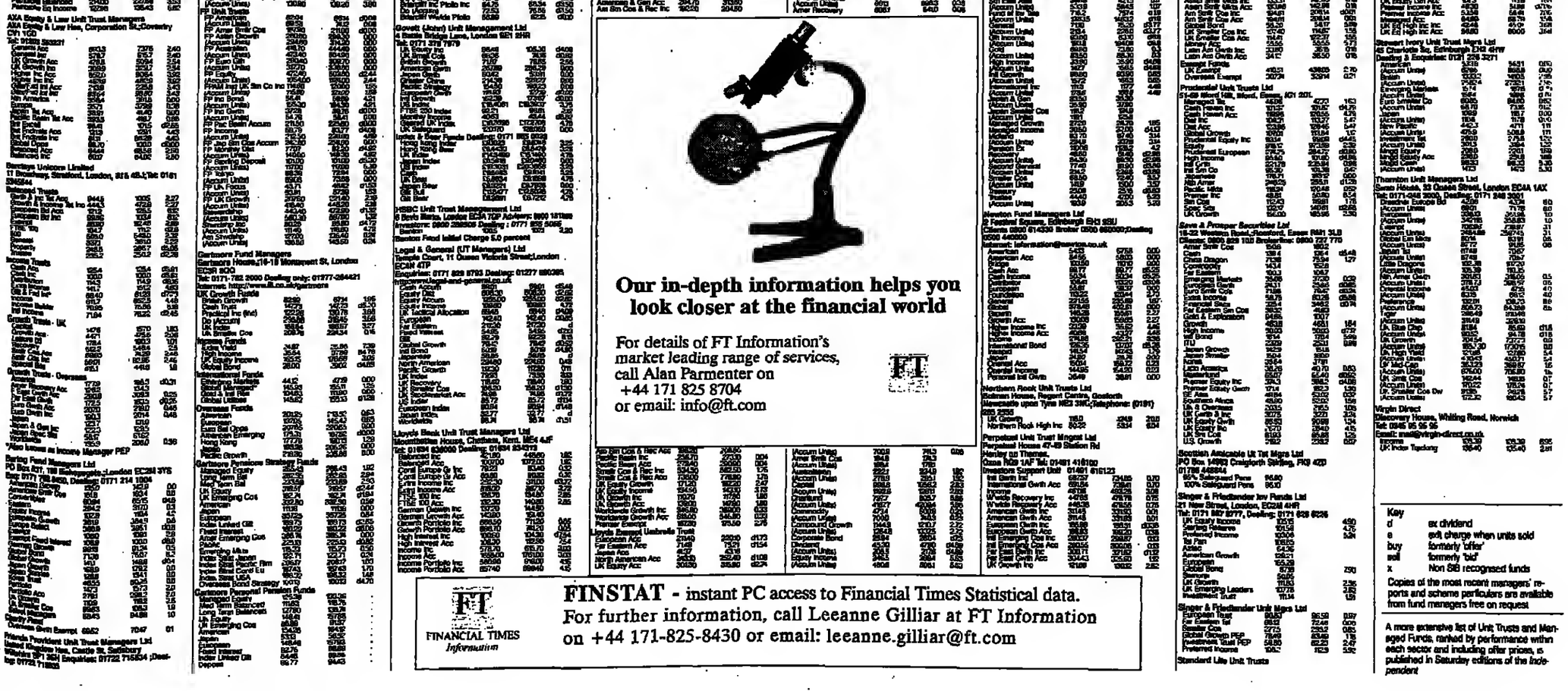
White Sugar LIFFE	£/tonne	Freight LIFFE	$/day pt	Wheat LIFFE	£/tonne	Corn CBOT	Cents/bushel Hi-Lo	Cents/bushel Sett
Mar	306.40	Jan	1435	Jan	95.85			
May	306.40	Feb	1389	Mar	98.25	Mar	268.50-263.00	268.00
Aug	308.20	Vol:	61	May	100.25	May	267.75-266.25	266.50
Vol	1523	Index	1517	Vol:	140	Jul	269.50-267.50	267.75

Other Softs

Nov	Maize (No.3)**	$/tonne	127.00	Feb/Apr	Soya Oil§	FL/100kg	31.00
Dec/Jan	Copra (†)	$/tonne	164.00	Dec/Jan	Coconut Oil ††	$/tonne	805.00
Mar	Cotton (NY)	US cent/lb	74.85	unq	Sunflower Oil	$/tonne	unq
Dec	Wool	Acent/kg	335.00	Jan	Rapeseed Oil§§	FL/100kg	92.50
Dec	Rubber*	Mcent/kg	316.50	Jan/Feb	Groundnut Oil	$/tonne	875.00

Origin: §Dutch EC - many origin - †Philippines/Indonesia *Malaysia **N Europe Source: FT Information Reuters

Latest Unit Trust Prices



Key
d ex dividend
e exit charge when units sold
buy formerly 'offer'
sell formerly 'bid'
x Non SIB recognised funds

Copies of the most recent managers' reports and scheme particulars are available from fund managers free on request

A more extensive list of Unit Trusts and Managed Funds, ranked by performance within each sector and including offer prices, is published in Saturday editions of the *Independent*

Spotlight on Theatreworld

Racing

JOHN COBB

While the Champion Hurdler, Collier Bay, and his predecessor, Alderbrook, pace their boxes, waiting for their first sight of a racecourse this season, one aspirant to that title, Theatreworld, was staking his claim with an impressive victory at Leopardstown yesterday. The Aidan O'Brien-trained gelding was bouncing back from a defeat in the Bula Hurdle at Cheltenham and his win in yesterday's December Festival Hurdle paid a compliment to his Cotswold conquerors, Large Action and Bimsey.

"We used the wrong tactics at Cheltenham, where Theatreworld never was happy on the faster ground anyway," O'Brien said. "He likes to bowl along in front and Charlie did exactly as I wanted.

"We have tied his [Theatreworld's] tongue down since the Bula Hurdle and I made no secret of the fact he was working much better with it since. We will probably keep him for the AIG Europe Champion Hurdle rather than running him in the Ladbroke here on Saturday week."

Theatreworld is now 33-1, with Ladbrokes, for the Champion Hurdle.

O'Brien reported that Urubande is his likely main Ladbroke hope, the top weight having recovered from the marathon journey that preceded his Newbury defeat by Zabadi.

Alderbrook and Collier Bay, meanwhile, are entries for Saturday's Pertemps Hurdle, reorganised for Sandown to replace Kempton's Christmas Hurdle. The track was just about raceable yesterday, but will need to be appreciably softer if either of the hurdling stars is to make an appearance.

With the abandonment of today's cards at Taunton and Warwick, and the meeting at Fontwell in grave doubt, Catterick provides the only racing on turf. Cheltenham's New Year's Day card is subject to a 10am inspection today, while prospects for Uttoxeter, Leicester and Windsor the same day look bleak. Tomorrow's Exeter card has already gone west.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Gems Lad
(Catterick 3.00)
NB: Kilcullen Lad
(Lingfield 1.25)

Pound for pound: Runners are hot on the heels of modest success in the selling race on Lingfield's Equitrack surface yesterday Photograph: David Ashdown

CATTERICK

HYPERION
12.30 Peace Lord
1.00 Chorus Line
1.30 Nick The Beak
2.00 Twin Falls
2.30 CHUMMY'S SAGA (nap)
3.00 Gems Lad
3.30 Nordic Prince

GOING: Good to Soft.
■ Left-hand course, undulating and sharp. Run-in 240yds.
■ Course is NW of town on A6136. Darlington station 14m – bus service to course. ADMISSION: Club £11; Tattersalls £7; Course £2.50 (under-16s free into all enclosures). CAR PARK: Members £2, remainder Free.

SIS | RACING CHANNEL

■ LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: Mrs M Reveley — 18 winners from 83 runners gives a success ratio of 21.7% and a loss to a £1 level stake of £16.23; K A Morgan — 13 winners, 43 runners, 30.2%, +£47.47; M Hammond — 12 winners, 98 runners, 12.2%, -£36.31; J G FitzGerald — 11 winners, 51 runners, 21.6%, +£0.30.
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A S Smith — 16 winners, 51 rides, 31.4%, +£40.71; P Niven — 15 winners, 67 rides, 22.4%, -£6.50; R Garritty — 14 winners, 84 rides, 16.7%, -£7.29; M Dwyer — 13 winners, 48 rides, 26.5%, +£7.29.
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Elliott's Wish (2.00), Chummy's Saga (2.30).
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Peace Lord (12.30), Primitive Penny (1.00) & Suranom (3.30) have been sent 201 miles by Mrs D Haine from Newmarket, Suffolk.

12.30 STAND MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) (DIV I) £2,150 added 2m Penalty Value £1,825

1 4 BOLLIN FRANK (49) (Sir Neil Westbrook) T Easterby 4 11 5 R Garritty
2 00460-4 DONT TELL TOM (12) (John Wade) J Wade 6 11 5 K Jones
3 DONNEGALE (Sir Simon Lycett Green) T Tate 4 11 5 P Niven
4 030-236 GOLF LAND (46) (BF) (Mrs J K Peutherer) L Lungo 4 11 5 R Supple
5 042403 HIGHLY CHARMING (13) (N Jinks) M Barraclough 4 11 5 A P McCoy
6 JOCK (Stanwick Racing) Miss S Williamson 4 11 5 A Todd (7)
7 50-0 KIERCHEM (29) (Mrs M Hunter) C Grant 5 11 5 P Carberry
8 MAFTUN (USA) (Anorak Partnership) G M Moore 4 11 5 J Callaghan
9 NEW CENTURY (USA) (A A Bloodstock Ltd) D Nicholls 4 11 5 D Gallagher
10 1020-23 PEACE LORD (46) (Sir Peter And Lady Gibbings) Mrs D Haine 6 11 5 J F Titley
11 0-0 POSTED ABROAD (11) (David M Fulton) J H Johnson 4 11 5 A Dobbin
12 0 REACH THE CLOUDS (34) (Middleham Park Racing IX) J Upson 4 11 5 P Parker
13 0-P TRIONA'S HOPE (31) (Mrs Karen Woodhead) E Caine 7 11 5 Tristan Davidson (7)
14 544- UNPREJUDICE (338) (Ben Brooks) M Hammond 5 11 5 Mr C Bonner (3)
15 PSP5-00 COQUET GOLD (38) (Mrs F T Walton) F Walton 5 11 0 B Storey
16 5204/U FIRST IN THE FIELD (20) (N G Mason) N Mason 5 11 0 S Haworth (7)
– 16 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Peace Lord, 7-2 Bollin Frank, 4-1 New Century, 8-1 Unprejudice, 12-1 Don't Tell Tom, Maftun, 16-1 others

FORM GUIDE

It is not difficult to imagine BOLLIN FRANK being suited by two miles on this relatively easy course, because the three Flat races he won at Haydock were over a mile and he either made the running or was in front some way from home. Two of the wins were on easy ground like today's and Bollin Frank, a tough character on his day, had a far from easy task first time over jumps. The three horses that beat him at Sedgefield were all experienced hurdlers who had won last time out. Don't Tell Tom, Golf Land and Highly Charming can win a race of this sort but Peace Lord looks the pick of the others that have run over hurdles even if his third to Mr Percy at Huntingdon has not worked out too well so far. Like Bollin Frank, New Century was suited by a mile on the Flat but, although rated higher, he might prefer faster ground. Maftun's 12-furlong win at Newcastle was also on a fast surface. Selection: BOLLIN FRANK

1.00 CAMP MAIDEN CHASE (CLASS F) £3,600 added 2m Penalty Value £2,806

1 16 BRIGHTER SHADE (50) (D S Hall) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 5 P Niven
2 35PRPP CARDINAL SINNER (12) (John Wade) J Wade 7 11 5 K Jones B
3 06PP/0 CHILDSWAY (116) (S J Robinson) S Robinson 8 11 5 Michael Brennan (5)
4 /0FPP-U COOLRENY (15) (Mrs V Thompson) V Thompson 7 11 5 Mr M Thompson
5 56-SP43 CURRAGH PETER (20) (David Bickerton) Mrs P Bickerton 8 11 5 Guy Lewis (3)
6 0/P0P0-P ERNEST ARAGORN (25) (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 7 11 5 R Farrant 7
7 5F53 FAIR ALLY (12) (A Milner) M Sowersby 6 11 5 D Parker
8 65P-RU4 GLAMANGLITZ (17) (Mrs Julie Martin) P Dalton 6 11 5 C Maude
9 0-U4P02 KARENASTINO (13) (Miss J Wood) Mrs S Smith 5 11 5 Mr P Murray
10 54440F QUIXALL CROSSETT (10) (Mrs Karen Woodhead) E Caine 11 11 5 Tristan Davidson (7)
11 0/5/600 SOUTH COAST STAR (11) (South Coast Syndicate) J H Johnson 6 11 5 A Dobbin
12 P052-32 CHORUS LINE (90) (Mrs A P Stead) P Beaumont 7 11 0 R Supple
13 006002- DIDDY RYMER (274) (Mrs S Smith) Mrs S Smith 6 11 0 Richard Guest
14 P PRIMITIVE PENNY (35) (Mrs Peter Mason) Mrs D Haine 5 11 0 J F Titley
– 14 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Chorus Line, 4-1 Brighter Shade, 6-1 Karenastino, 7-1 Diddy Rymer, 10-1 Glamanglitz, 12-1 Curragh Peter, Childsway, 14-1 others

FORM GUIDE

BRIGHTER SHADE won a point-to-point in the mud in Ireland and will surely need more of a stamina test to bring out the best in him, but he also managed to win a NH Flat race on fast ground at Sedgefield in October and most of today's opposition would be pushed to match that, even if it was a weak race. Chorus Line has chasing experience to rely upon and could easily make the frame again. Diddy Rymer was rated roughly the same over hurdles as Chorus Line as over fences but lack of a recent run and lack of chasing experience count against her. Diddy Rymer's trainer, Sue Smith, also runs Karenastino, whose recent second to Tim Soldier here suggests he is getting the hang of jumping fences. Primitive Penny ran poorly in a novice hurdle at Huntingdon last month but she is a winning point-to-pointer, so being over fences may help. Selection: BRIGHTER SHADE

1.30 BARTON CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 3m 1f 110yds Penalty Value £2,553

1 14/01P/ JOHNNY KELLY (882) (C J Murphy) J Carr 9 12 0 F Leahy
2 066-613 NICK THE BEAK (24) (Sir Nicholas Wilson) J Upson 7 11 12 G Supple (3)
3 0/11300- MOONSHINE DANCER (307) (C3) (Aarons Archer Partnership) D Bader 6 11 6 G Lee
4 FP-12F1 TROODOS (21) (CD) (Scotnorth Racing Ltd) Mrs A Swinbank 10 11 4 B Grattan (3)
5 P-F4P04 FLAT TOP (13) (D F Spence) M W Easterby 5 10 13 P Midgley B
6 F0SF6-F DORLIN CASTLE (18) (CD) (BF) (Mrs D C Greig) L Lungo 8 10 12 I Jardine (5)
7 5-12432 SMART APPROACH (12) (Mrs M S Teversham) Mrs M Reveley 6 10 8 C McCormack (5)
8 36F-133 PEBBLE BEACH (50) (D) (Pebble Beach Partnership) G M Moore 6 10 5 N Horrocks (7)
9 065150- TURKISH TOWER (237) (G R S Nixon) R Nixon 5 10 4 G Cahill
10 02/54- HOBKIRK (305) (W Amos) A Whillans 7 10 1 D Parker
11 0P6-623 QUIET MISTRESS (12) (W A Bethell) W Bethell 6 10 0 Michael Brennan B
12 USP55-0 CARNMONEY (20) (J Sisterson) J Sisterson 8 10 0 S Taylor
– 12 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Quiet Mistress 9st 13lb, Carnmoney 9st 7lb.
BETTING: 4-1 Nick The Beak, 9-2 Dorlin Castle, 5-1 Troodos, 6-1 Smart Approach, 7-1 Pebble Beach, 8-1 Flat Top, 10-1 Quiet Mistress, 12-1 others

FORM GUIDE

Not for the first time, DORLIN CASTLE was let down by his jumping on his reappearance at the last meeting, when he fell six from home in a novice chase. He even came down in a handicap hurdle at Perth last season, although on that occasion he was still in front when falling at the final flight. Dorlin Castle is clearly capable of winning races, and there must be a chance he can prove that back on the course and distance where he won twice as a novice hurdler (admittedly on much more testing ground). Like Dorlin Castle, Troodos goes well over this extended three miles and another good run looks likely following his Sedgefield win from Manettia. Nick The Beak carries a big weight over a trip that may be beyond his best but he is obviously back in form after going last season without a win. Flat Top's staying-on fourth behind Fryup Satellite here a fortnight ago was his best run so far this season, although that was over a much shorter trip and he finished last on the only other occasion he wore blinkers. Smart Approach needs to improve because Pebble Beach beat her at Wetherby in October and again when Queen's Award won there on 1 November. The mare has been kept on the go and was the only one to make a race of it with Phrase here last time, whereas Pebble Beach could be fresh by a short break. Selection: DORLIN CASTLE

2.00 ZETLAND NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 2m 3f Penalty Value £3,236

1 225121 TWIN FALLS (12) (C) (Mrs Susan Moore) G M Moore 5 12 0 J Callaghan
2 100-4U3 WEEHEBY (USA) (17) (The DWNA Partnership) M Barraclough 7 11 9 R Supple
3 20122F BALLYLINE (35) (The 49 Partnership) W Kemp 5 11 8 A P McCoy
4 3P-6044 OVERWHELM (14) (Lady Watford) V Thompson 8 11 4 Mr M Thompson
5 00-P61P ELLIOTT'S WISH (11) (David M Fulton) J H Johnson 5 11 1 G F Ryan B
6 5642P1 FRONTIER FLIGHT (USA) (18) (D) (Miss L C Siddall) Miss L Siddall 6 11 0 E Husband (3)
7 065/2U-P WORLD WITHOUT END (USA) (21) (Paul Calloo) M Sowersby 7 11 0 D Parker
8 204-481 GARBO'S BOY (15) (J R Turner) J Turner 6 10 13 W Fry
9 06/P4-3P HANGOVER (25) (Richard Edwards) R Lee 10 10 9 G Hogan (3)
10 20504-0 TRISTAN'S COMET (206) (D Wilcox) J L Harris 9 10 8 D Gallagher
11 430P/ MOST RICH (794) (C E Sheen) B Ellison 8 10 7 G Cahill
12 /6P/600 MARLINGFORD (31) (Miss J Seaton) Mrs J Jordan 9 10 0 L McGrath (7)
13 00-3333 KILTULLA (21) (R Preston) Mrs S Smith 6 10 0 Richard Guest
14 603F5R MONAUGHTY MAN (12) (Mrs Karen Woodhead) E Caine 10 10 0 K Johnson
15 PP00/ MOSS PAGEANT (885) (Mrs F Walton) F Walton 6 10 0 B Storey
– 13 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True weights: Kiltulla 9st 13lb, Monaughty Man 9st 10lb, Moss Pageant 9st 8lb.
BETTING: 7-4 Twin Falls, 6-1 Ballyline, 8-1 Frontier Flight, Elliott's Wish, 10-1 Kiltulla, 12-1 Weeheby, Garbo's Boy, 14-1 others

FORM GUIDE

Although he was not easy to win with over hurdles, Twin Falls has taken well to chasing and a couple of weeks ago he beat Port In A Storm in a handicap only 24 hours after finishing a five-length second to Monyman (level weights) in a novice chase on this course. BALLYLINE has also finished second to Monyman recently – beaten a length and a half when receiving 6lb in a race of this sort at Kelso in November. With Tony McCoy booked, Ballyline might be able to make the most of the 6lb he receives from the top weight. Elliott's Wish, Garbo's Boy and Frontier Flight all had a bit of good luck when winning their respective chases. Elliott's Wish owes his Hexham success to the last-fence fall of the favourite, Golden Hello, and is blinkered for the first time after misbehaving at the start and running moderately on a return trip there. With odds-on Celtic Giant and second favourite Aslan out of contention, Garbo's Boy was left with little to beat at Newcastle. Had Saxon Mead stayed on his feet, Frontier Flight would have finished only second in a novices' handicap at Taunton, but at least that run, only his second over fences, shows that Frontier Flight is a force to be reckoned with at this level. Restricted to just two starts last season, Hangover must have found his latest Hereford race coming too soon (only three days) after his comeback third to in-form Lord Of The West and Eastern River (who had won his previous race). Hangover is not without a chance but is still without a chase win after starting favourite for this race two years ago. Selection: BALLYLINE

2.30 FINGALL SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,450 added 2m Penalty Value £2,077

1 6-30546 [illegible] (USA) (C3) [illegible] G M Moore 6 11 13 N Horrocks (7)
2 44P05-P BALLADEER (32) (D) (G P Hudson) B Rothwell 7 11 11 A P McCoy
3 P6-0450 WONDERFUL [illegible] (D) (A A Collins) T L Harris 6 11 4 D Gallagher
4 0446-31 AUNTIE ALICE (24) (The East Riding Partnership) J FitzGerald 6 11 1 F Leahy (3)
5 06300-2 WEATHER ALERT (25) (Peacock Partnership) K Morgan 5 11 0 A S Smith
6 501000 FLY TO THE END (USA) (15) (CD) [illegible] J Quinn 6 10 11 R Hogan (3)
7 00-0652 ENVIRONMENTAL LAW (22) (Mrs L E McKelvey) W McKeown 5 10 11 G Cahill B
8 304960 [illegible] (49) [illegible] A Whillans 5 10 11 S Taylor (3)
9 005-00P [illegible] (11) (CD) [illegible] D Moffatt 5 10 9 D J Moffatt
10 5PP-462 CHUMMY'S SAGA (27) (Mrs I Durand) L Lungo 8 10 9 R Supple B
11 00-5 BOLD TOP (22) (Mrs G M Z Spark) B Rothwell 8 10 6 A Dobbin 7
12 253-6P4 TROY'S DREAM (14) (Steve Sample) M Hammond 5 10 6 R Garritty
13 600U-P5 ARTHUR BEE (27) (Mrs O A Bousfield) B Bousfield 9 10 0 B Storey
14 0U6P4F MISS MONT (14) (Mrs A Q Holliday) F Murphy 7 10 0 A Roche
15 00-0502 SECONDS AWAY (14) [illegible] J Goldie 5 10 0 G Lee (3)
16 7OPP TOUGH CHARACTER (25) (Mrs M B Durkan) M Sowersby 6 10 0 N Horrocks (7)
– 16 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Arthur Bee 9st 10lb, Miss Mont 9st 9lb, Seconds Away 9st 8lb, Tough Character 9st 4lb.
BETTING: 9-2 Environmental Law, 5-1 Weather Alert, 7-1 [illegible], 8-1 Auntie Alice, Chummy's Saga, 10-1 Fly To The End, 12-1 others

3.00 NEVILLE CRUMP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 3m 1f 110yds Penalty Value £3,054

1 13/5022- POPESHALL (248) (BF) [illegible] Miss S Williamson 9 12 0 A Todd (7)
2 311-23F WESTWELL BOY (11) (D) (BF) (D N Yeadon) P Beaumont 10 11 8 R Supple
3 U36PP-U TWIN STATES (27) (CD) (Mrs E Dixon) J Turner 7 11 2 W Fry
4 1-03U02 GALE AHEAD (27) (D) (John Robson) G M Moore 6 11 2 N Bentley
5 4/3P3-1 HEAVENLY CITIZEN (12) (CD) (J L Gledson) J Gledson 8 10 13 B Storey
6 3/4120-4 CALL THE SHOTS (48) (John Wade) J Wade 7 10 6 K Jones
7 P55-433 SPARROW HALL (12) (Peter Holt) J FitzGerald 9 10 6 A P McCoy
8 /3-41P1 GEMS LAD (12) (CD) (Miss J Wood) Mrs S Smith 9 10 4 Richard Guest
9 4P13P4 JENDEE (CD) (Ferguson Limited) B Ellison 8 10 3 G Cahill
10 463-PP1 TIM SOLDIER (FR) (28) (C) [illegible] M Barraclough 9 10 2 A Dobbin
11 5041 DAWN LAD (22) [illegible] Mrs A Swinbank 7 10 0 J Supple
– 11 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Dawn Lad 9st 9lb.
BETTING: 7-2 Heavenly Citizen, 9-2 Gale Ahead, 5-1 Westwell Boy, 6-1 Gems Lad, 8-1 Dawn Lad, 10-1 Call The Shots, Tim Soldier, 12-1 others

FORM GUIDE

Being 5lb out of the handicap does not help and it also means that DAWN LAD is 10lb higher than he was when successful at Sedgefield, where the trip was only two miles five. On the plus side, however, Dawn Lad is a lightly-raced seven-year-old who might just have the necessary improvement in him and the way he won at Sedgefield suggests he possesses the necessary stamina. He has won 4 point-to-points in Ireland. This promises to be far tougher than the Sedgefield race, though, with Heavenly Citizen attempting to follow up his recent course and distance win, a race in which Sparrow Hall (5lb better) was 22 lengths away third. Gems Lad and Tim Soldier also won at the last meeting, Gems Lad scraping home from Teco Gold in the novice event. He made mistakes then, and fell in a novices' handicap at Southwell beforehand, so his jumping needs to improve, but at least Gems Lad stays the trip, whereas Tim Soldier's two course wins were over a much shorter distance. Westwell Boy was in contention when unseating his rider at the 12th at Hexham 11 days ago, leaving the way clear for Off The Bru. He had run well beforehand and should be thereabouts, along with Gale Ahead, who had Off The Bru behind in third when chasing home Kenmore-Speed (stablemate of Gems Lad) here on 4 December. That was Gale Ahead's best run so far this season. Selection: DAWN LAD

3.30 STAND MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) (DIV II) £2,150 added 2m Penalty Value £1,825

1 COEUR FRANCAIS (FR) (Mrs J Waggott) N Waggott 4 11 5 A Dobbie
2 0 INTIMAAN (FR) (124) (Ryan Electrical Distributors Ltd) Mrs A Swinbank 4 11 5 J Railton
3 0-F0F JARROW (13) (Hugh Gething) Mrs A Naughton 5 11 5 M Foster
4 4 NIGHT DANCE (21) (Racecourse Medical Officers Association) K Morgan 4 11 5 A S Smith
5 11- NORDIC PRINCE (405) (Mrs S L Worthington) T Tate 5 11 5 R Garritty
6 0/0 ORMODS RISK (29) (Mrs Karen Woodhead) E Caine 5 11 5 Tristan Davidson (7)
7 00 POLITICAL MILLSTAR (28) (G R S Nixon) R Nixon 4 11 5 N Bentley
8 QUANGO (L Milligan) J FitzGerald 4 11 5 A P McCoy
9 0-0P SELECTRIC (49) (John Wade) J Wade 5 11 5 K Jones
10 05-5156 SILVER MINX (12) (Mrs E A Hetherwell) Mrs M Reveley 4 11 5 P Niven
11 SURANOM (Mrs Diana Haine) Mrs D Haine 4 11 5 J F Titley
12 0 TAUNE (USA) (20) (W J K Dods) M Dods 4 11 5 R Supple
13 030-6 WELBURN BOY (37) (I Bray) R Woodhouse 4 11 5 J Callaghan
14 BEST OF ALL (Robert And) J Berry 4 11 0 M Moloney
15 06 JALWARD (22) (R V Jackson) H Alexander 4 11 0 R McGrath (5)
16 0000- MILLERS GOLDENGIRL (283) (Mrs S Smith) Mrs S Smith 5 11 0 Richard Guest
– 16 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Night Dance, 3-1 Quango, 9-2 Nordic Prince, 7-1 Suranom, 12-1 Best of All, 16-1 Intimaan, Silver Minx, 25-1 others

LINGFIELD

HYPERION
12.55 Broughtons Formula 1.25 Kilcullen Lad
1.55 Ekaterini Paritsi 2.25 Sihafi 2.55 Angel Face
3.25 Magazine Gap

GOING: Standard. STALLS: 5f & 1m – outside; rest – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low in sprints.
■ Equitrack surface; left-hand, sharp undulating course.
■ Course is SE of town on B2028. Lingfield station (served by London, Victoria) adjoins course.

SIS | RACING CHANNEL

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Kilcullen Lad (1.25), Dancing Jack (2.25), Gold Lance (3.25), Logie Pert Lad (3.25).
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Evening In Paris (3.25) has been sent 270 miles by M Johnston from Middleham, N Yorkshire; Green Boulevard (1.55) sent 208 miles by J Berry from Cockerham, Lancashire.

12.55 SEVASTOPOL APPRENTICE HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 1m 5f

1 550030 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (36) K Burke 3 10 0 Emily Joyce (5) 1
2 262313 MATTHIAS MYSTIQUE (20) (C) Miss S Sanders 3 9 6 Jo Hunnam (3) 3
3 310642 BROUGHTONS FORMULA (29) (CD) (BF) W Musson 8 9 0 Darren Williams (7) 4 B
4 430/0 AL HAAL (12) R O'Sullivan 7 9 0 D Griffiths 6
5 234016 RASAYEL (3) (D) (BF) P Evans 8 8 12 Anthony Bond (5) 8
6 000343 COH SHO NO (5) S Dow 3 8 10 A Daly 2
7 000005 ADILOV (5) J Bridger 4 8 0 Martin Dwyer 7
8 0-00000 QUEENS FANCY (18) S Dow 3 7 10 D Salt (7) 5
– 8 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Queens Fancy 7st 4lb.
BETTING: 9-4 Broughtons Formula, 3-1 Matthias Mystique, 7-2 Rasayel, 7-1 Coh Sho No, 8-1 More Than You Know, 12-1 Al Haal, 16-1 others

1.25 ALMA NURSERY HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2YO 6f

1 562121 JUST LOUI (17) (CD) W Turner 9 7 D Sweeney (5) 1
2 435015 HEAVENLY MISS (5) (C) (D) J Bridger 8 13 S Sanders 3
3 102211 KILCULLEN LAD (18) (CD) P Mooney 8 13 J Quinn 1 B
4 110004 EAGER TO PLEASE (11) (CD) (BF) Miss Gay Kelleway 8 9 Dane O'Neill 4
5 001210 ADVANCE REPRO (144) (D) J Akehurst 8 9 D Holland 6 B
6 00040 ROCK TO THE TOP (36) J Sheehan 8 8 A Morris 7
7 202204 WINDBORN (20) C Allen 7 11 Martin Dwyer (5) 5 B
– 7 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Kilcullen Lad, 5-2 Just Loui, 6-1 Eager To Please, 6-1 Heavenly Miss, 8-1 Advance Repro, 10-1 Windborn, 12-1 Rock To The Top

1.55 LIGHT BRIGADE MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS F) £2,500 2YO 5f

1 000603 COUNTLESS TIMES (5) W Muir 9 0 Dane O'Neill 2
2 340 INCATIME (26) C James 9 0 C Rutter 4
3 205203 EKATERINI PARITSI (26) W Turner 8 9 D Sweeney (5) 6 V
4 05 GREEN BOULEVARD (24) (BF) J Berry 8 9 P Roberts (5) 3
5 0002 HEVER GOLF LOVER (18) T Naughton 8 9 D Holland 5
6 000 SHE'S ELECTRIC (20) J Bridger 8 9 S Whitworth 1
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 Green Boulevard, 5-1 Hever Golf Lover, 7-2 Ekaterini Paritsi, 4-1 Countless Times, 9-2 Incatime, 20-1 She's Electric

2.25 INKERMAN HANDICAP (CLASS F) £2,500 added 5f

1 104300 SQUIRE CORRIE (28) (D) D Chapman 4 10 0 D Holland 8
2 504300 CHEEKY CHAPPY (3) (CD) D Chapman 5 10 0 A Culhane 1 B
3 000001 SIHAFI (26) (C) J Carr 3 9 10 A Clark 7
4 000003 COLSTON-C (28) P Evans 4 9 5 S Sanders 2
5 530100 MISTER RAIDER (31) (CD) E Wheeler 4 9 5 A Daly (5) 10 B
6 060000 DANCING JACK (18) (CD) J Bridger 3 9 5 S Whitworth 6 B
7 000005 WINDRUSH BOY (28) (D) J Bosley 6 9 0 C Rutter 4
8 00040-0 BRIGHT PARAGON (252) (CD) H Ivory 7 8 5 Martin Dwyer (5) 9
9 006045 DANGERA (18) (CD) P Howling 6 8 3 J Quinn 5 B
10 003350 OSCILIGHTS GIFT (105) Mark Campion 4 7 13 N Adams 3
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Sihafi, 4-1 Squire Corrie, 9-2 Cheeky Chappy, 5-1 Colston-C, 8-1 Mister Raider, Windrush Boy, 12-1 others

2.55 CRIMEA HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,000 added 1m 2f

1 0-60112 ADMIRTON (26) (CD) (BF) Mrs J Cecil 4 9 12 Martin Dwyer (5) 9
2 001221 ANGEL FACE (28) (CD) P Evans 3 9 12 A Culhane 7
3 513036 PHILISTAR (31) (CD) J Eustace 3 9 11 D Sweeney (5) 6
4 011411 DOUBLE RUSH (42) (CD) T Mills 4 9 11 S Sanders 2
5 200504 KITTY KITTY CANCAN (53) Lady Herries 3 9 6 A Clark 3 B
6 612436 HARLEQUIN WALK (11) (C) (BF) R O'Sullivan 5 8 10 D Holland 4
7 035040 SULTON (18) S Dow 3 7 13 A Daly (5) B
8 000003 DANCE OF JOY (184) J Carr 4 7 12 J Quinn 5
9 000000 GREAT BEAR (11) D Chapman 4 7 10 J Bramhill (7) 1 B
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Great Bear 7st 5lb.
BETTING: 5-2 Angel Face, 3-1 Admirton, 7-2 Double Rush, 8-1 Philistar, Kitty Kitty Cancan, 12-1 Harlequin Walk, Dance of Joy, 16-1 others

3.25 THIN RED LINE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,000 added 7f

1 00 GOLD LANCE (210) R O'Sullivan 3 9 0 D Holland 4 B
2 000400 LOGIE PERT LAD (12) J Bridger 4 9 0 S Whitworth 5 B
3 MAGAZINE GAP Mrs J Cecil 3 9 0 Amanda Sanders (5) 10
4 0 EVENING IN PARIS (55) M Johnston 3 8 9 J Weaver 3
5 05-0000 GRACIOUS GRETCLO (31) P Evans 3 8 9 T G McLaughlin 8
6 HIGHTIDE J Arnold 4 8 9 A Clark 1
7 0-42050 JAREER DO (32) B Palling 4 8 9 Dane O'Neill 7
8 044/034 RIVER SEINE (FR) (5) S Knight 4 8 9 S Sanders 9
9 300005 SHERWOOD (28) K Ivory 3 8 8 Martin Dwyer (5) 6
10 006000 SQUARE MILE MISS (53) P Howling 3 8 9 J Quinn 2
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Evening In Paris, 11-4 Magazine Gap, 5-1 River Seine, 8-1 Jareer Do, 10-1 Square Mile Miss, Gracious Gretclo, 12-1 others

FONTWELL

HYPERION
1.10 Battleship Bruce 1.40 Sugar Hill 2.10 I'm A Chippy 2.40 Snow Board (nb) 3.10 The Mine Captain 3.40 Rangitikei

INSPECTION: 7.30 AM

GOING: Good to Firm.
■ Left-hand hurdle course; figure-of-eight chase course.
■ Course is S of village at junction of A29 and A27. Barnham station (Brighton - Portsmouth line) 2m. ADMISSION: Club £12; Junior Club (12 to 15-year-olds) £2, under 12s free; Tattersalls £8 (accompanied under-16s free); Silver Ring £4. CAR PARK: Picnic area £4 plus £4 for each occupant; remainder free.

SIS | RACING CHANNEL

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Saboteuse (1.10), Lord Vick (1.40).
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Rainbow Fountain (1.40) & Elite Governor (2.10) sent 160 miles by N Lampard from Kingsbridge, Devon.

1.10 TORTINGTON SELLING HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,450 added 2m 2f 110yds

1 2/12/P- LITTLE NOD (246) J Best 7 11 5 Mr P O'Keeffe (7)
2 50/ ANOTHER FIDDLE (761) S Pearce 8 10 12 C Llewellyn
3 205-23 BATTLESHIP BRUCE (26) T Casey 4 10 12 D Bridgwater
4 04/ CORPORATE IMAGE (1,055) T Hind 6 10 12 P McLoughlin
5 00/P00- KARIBU (GER) (283) J Bennett 5 10 12 L Harvey
6 00 NOODADANTE (38) N Mitchell 6 10 12 Sophie Mitchell (5)
7 65F033 WATER HAZARD (21) S Dow 4 10 12 A Dicken
8 GARLANDHAYES Miss K George 4 10 7 J R Kavanagh
9 00P-66P SABOTEUSE (47) J Poulton 4 10 7 T J Murphy B
– 9 declared –

BETTING: 4-5 Battleship Bruce, 3-1 Water Hazard, 8-1 Another Fiddle, Corporate Image, 10-1 Little Nod, 16-1 Garlandhayes, 20-1 others

1.40 STORRINGTON NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 3m 2f 110yds

1 42-2521 SUGAR HILL (21) J Gifford 8 11 10 P Hide
2 U2F2-43 PEARL'S CHOICE (15) J McConnochie 8 11 7 J R Kavanagh
3 3032/40 RUBINS BOY (24) N Walker 10 11 0 D Flanagan (7)
4 300-F52 WISE WONDER (25) M Bradstock 6 10 13 P Holley
5 /1/2-5F5 DUKES MEADOW (17) K Bailey 8 10 12 A Thornton B
6 PP-0462 COOL CHARACTER (19) R Buckler 8 10 6 B Powell
7 4P/3-PP5 RAINBOW FOUNTAIN (11) N Lampard 9 10 8 Mr A Kinane
8 PP/34- LORD VICK (399) Miss A Embiricos 7 10 3 J Ryan B
9 6P-UF33 CARDINAL RULE (34) Miss V Williams 7 10 0 N Williamson
10 6-PPP MILLFRONE (21) R Rowe 6 10 0 D O'Sullivan
11 P00/0P- WESSEX MILORD (453) J Bennett 11 10 0 L Harvey
12 0P0/3-P LITTLE ROWLEY (27) Mrs L Richards 7 10 0 M Richards
– 12 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Millfrone, Wessex Milord, Little Rowley 9st 8lb.
BETTING: 2-1 Sugar Hill, 7-2 Wise Wonder, 4-1 Cool Character, 8-1 Cardinal Rule, Pearl's Choice, 12-1 Dukes Meadow, 16-1 others

2.10 HAYLING ISLAND NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 6f 110yds

1 3/20-14F SCOTBY (BEL) (21) R Buckler 6 11 5 S McNeill
2 1 SPARKLING SPRING (34) K Bailey 5 11 5 A Thornton
3 30-12 SPRING GALE (24) (CD) O Sherwood 5 11 5 J Osborne
4 CLARKES GORSE J Gifford 5 10 12 P Hide
5 U-23P ELITE GOVERNOR (18) N Lampard 7 10 12 Mr A Kinane
6 50-65 FLAXLEY WOOD (14) R Buckler 5 10 12 B Powell
7 04 FROME LAD (11) W Turner 4 10 12 I Power (7)
8 042-64 I'M A CHIPPY (17) G Balding 8 10 12 B Fenton
9 U0 KYBO'S REVENGE (14) R Rowe 5 10 12 A Garrity (7)
10 04-4333 LORD ROOBLE (22) J Gifford 5 10 12 L Aspell (3)
11 21-U12 MARCHING MARQUIS (17) (BF) N Chance 5 10 12 R Johnson
12 20/3-PP0 MURPHY'S RUN (26) P Eccles 6 10 12 Mr B Thornton (5)
13 0 NO MATTER (17) R Rowe 5 10 12 D O'Sullivan
14 500-2 NORDIC SPREE (44) A Moore 4 10 12 P Holley
15 3/33- PROFESSOR PAGE (408) T Thomson Jones 6 10 12 M A Fitzgerald
16 00 HI MARBLE (17) Mrs Merrita Jones 5 10 7 Derek Byrne
– 16 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Sparkling Spring, 4-1 Spring Gale, 5-1 Scotby, 10-1 Clarkes Gorse, Marching Marquis, I'm A Chippy, 12-1 Nordic Spree, 16-1 others

2.40 'NICKEL COIN' HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,750 added 2m 6f 110yds

1 1532-43 SMUGGLER'S POINT (27) J Bridger 6 11 10 D Morris
2 51P-1 ISMENO (21) S Dow 5 11 8 A Dicken
3 4-12P25 KALASADI (20) (CD) V Soane 5 11 7 M Richards 8
4 0-22111 LETS BE FRANK (15) N Chance 5 11 4 R Johnson
5 4-4F2PF SORBIERE (14) N Henderson 9 11 3 M A Fitzgerald
6 45514P LEGAL ARTIST (19) Miss C Johnsey 6 11 1 L Harvey
7 4RR1-00 ST VILLE (15) (C) (D) R Buckler 10 10 11 B Powell
8 2/P5-111 SNOW BOARD (24) Mrs Merrita Jones 7 10 8 Derek Byrne
9 4-4P552 FIRST CLASS (22) (BF) G Allen 8 10 2 R Greene
10 6102-P4 MADAME PRESIDENT (34) (C) C Holdock 5 10 0 Sophie Mitchell (5)
11 0002/1-0 KALAKATE (49) J Bridger 11 10 0 I Lawrence
12 4U4346 ROGERS PAL (27) A Moore 9 10 0 K Batchelor (7)
13 4P5-P50 RASHIN (14) (CD) S Woodman 11 10 0 S McNeill
– 13 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Kalakate 9st 11lb, Roger's Pal 9st 4lb, Rashin 9st 1lb.
BETTING: 5-2 Lets Be Frank, 3-1 Snow Board, 6-1 Ismeno, 8-1 Smuggler's Point, Madame President, 10-1 First Class, 12-1 others

3.10 WHITELAW CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,100 added 2m 3f

1 P11/FPU BO KNOWS BEST (17) (D) G L Moore 7 11 11 M A Fitzgerald
2 13-F111 BEATSON (18) R Buckler 7 11 8 B Powell
3 U11-32F ARMALA (34) (C) (D) J Gifford 11 11 4 L Aspell (3)
4 313P-41 TOO SHARP (8) Miss H Knight 8 11 2 (6ex) J F Titley
5 4PUF3-U YEOMAN WARRIOR (18) R Rowe 8 10 12 D O'Sullivan
6 U44/16-2 HAWAIIAN YOUTH (28) (BF) G McCourt 8 10 9 A Maguire
7 02211-3 THE MINE CAPTAIN (29) (D) O Sherwood 9 10 8 J Osborne
8 3/04P-52 SOLEIL DANCER (14) D Grissell 8 10 0 P Henley (5)
9 0-41323 FICHU (14) (BF) Mrs L Richards 8 10 0 M Richards
10 P6P5P3- WELSH COTTAGE (221) J Gifford 9 10 0 P Hide
11 6033-24 MASTER COMEDY (36) (C) Miss L Bower 12 10 0 N Williamson 6
– 11 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Soleil Dancer 9st 9lb, Fichu 9st 2lb, Welsh Cottage 9st 11lb, Master Comedy 9st 10lb.
BETTING: 7-4 Beatson, 7-2 Too Sharp, 6-1 The Mine Captain, 10-1 Bo Knows Best, Armala, Hawaiian Youth, 12-1 others

3.40 BRIGHTON HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,750 added 2m 2f 110yds

1 211-242 MIM-LOU-AND (46) Miss H Knight 4 12 0 Mr A Wintle (7)
2 2314-24 MARIUS (21) (BF) J Gifford 6 11 9 P Hide
3 01F1-PP DECIDE YOURSELF (13) T Thomson Jones 8 11 6 M A Fitzgerald
4 2-4113 RANGITIKEI (N2) (BD) C Mann 5 11 2 J Railton
5 2-55F22 STONEY VALLEY (17) J Jenkins 6 11 1 N Williamson
6 122U5-P MANOLETE (29) Mrs Merrita Jones 5 10 12 Derek Byrne
7 40-1210 MAZZINI (24) R Rowe 5 10 10 D O'Sullivan
8 21116-5 CHIEFTAIN'S CROWN (165) (BF) T Hind 5 10 3 P McLoughlin
9 5430/ NEVER FORGOTTEN (17) (CD) A Moore 11 10 0 P Holley
10 636-210 SUPERMICK (33) (BF) W Muir 5 10 0 M Richards
– 10 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Supermick 9st 13lb.
BETTING: 5-2 Mim-Lou-And, 3-1 Rangitikei, 4-1 Marius, 8-1 Supermick, Stoney Valley, 10-1 Decide Yourself, 12-1 others

[illegible] MARKET

Bookmakers' ante-post lists are racing's futures market. Readers can catch up with the latest developments – best prices are in bold – in this sphere with *The Independent*'s Tuesday service.

1997 Ladbroke Handicap Hurdle (2m)

Horse (Trainer/weight)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
[illegible] (P Burke/10st10lb)	6-1	7-1	5-1	6-1
[illegible] (A O'Brien/10st5lb)	10-1	10-1	10-1	10-1
[illegible] (Mrs M Reveley/11st2lb)	9-1	10-1	10-1	9-1
[illegible] (G M Moore/10st3lb)	10-1	8-1	10-1	11-1
[illegible] (S Treacy/10st11lb)	12-1	12-1	12-1	doubtful
[illegible]	16-1	14-1	14-1	16-1
[illegible]	14-1	16-1	14-1	14-1
[illegible]	16-1	10-1	doubtful	16-1
[illegible]	16-1	16-1	16-1	14-1
[illegible]	16-1	16-1	16-1	16-1
[illegible] (J Bolger/10st0lb)	16-1	14-1	16-1	20-1
[illegible]	16-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
[illegible]	14-1	16-1	16-1	20-1
Hill Society (N Meade/10st12lb)	16-1	20-1	14-1	16-1
[illegible] (P O'Leary/10st1lb)	20-1	20-1	14-1	20-1
[illegible] (A O'Brien/10st9lb)	16-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
[illegible]	16-1	20-1	12-1	16-1
[illegible]	20-1	16-1	20-1	16-1
[illegible]	20-1	16-1	16-1	20-1
[illegible]	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
[illegible]	16-1	25-1	16-1	20-1
[illegible]	20-1	25-1	16-1	25-1
[illegible]	14-1	doubtful	20-1	25-1
Great Performance [illegible]	25-1	16-1	14-1	16-1
[illegible]	33-1	20-1	20-1	25-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3, 4 (Leopardstown, Saturday, 11 January)

1997 Champion Hurdle (2m 110yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Alderbrook (K Bailey)	5-2	3-1	3-1	7-2
Collier Bay (J Old)	6-1	5-1	4-1	5-1
Large Action (O Sherwood)	11-2	8-1	6-1	9-1
Space Trucker (Mrs J Harrington)	12-1	12-1	10-1	12-1
Dato Star (J M Jefferson)	16-1	14-1	14-1	16-1
Escartefigue (D Nicholson)	16-1	14-1	14-1	14-1
Castle Sweep (D Nicholson)	20-1	14-1	14-1	16-1
Urubande (A O'Brien)	16-1	20-1	16-1	16-1
Bimsey (R Akehurst)	16-1	16-1	25-1	25-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Tuesday, 11 March)

1997 Triumph Hurdle (2m 1f)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Tote
Namoodaj (D Nicholson)	20-1	14-1	20-1
Shooting Light (P G Murphy)	20-1	14-1	14-1
White Sea (M Pipe)	16-1	20-1	20-1
Soldat (D Nicholson)	16-1	16-1	20-1
Disallowed (Mrs H Knight)	25-1	33-1	25-1
Far Dawn (Mrs A J Perrett)	14-1	16-1	33-1
Noble Lord (R Buckler)	33-1	33-1	16-1
Pomme Secret (M Pipe)	25-1	50-1	25-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Thursday, 13 March)

1997 Cheltenham Gold Cup Chase (3m 2f 110yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Imperial Call (F Sutherland)	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2
One Man (G Richards)	6-1	6-1	7-1	8-1
Rough Quest (T Casey)	8-1	8-1	8-1	8-1
Coome Hill (W Dennis)	9-1	12-1	10-1	12-1
Addington Boy (G Richards)	14-1	14-1	12-1	12-1
Dorans Pride (M Hourigan)	16-1	16-1	12-1	14-1
The Grey Monk (G Richards)	16-1	14-1	12-1	16-1
Banjo (D Nicholson)	25-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Danoli (T Foley)	25-1	16-1	20-1	25-1
Mr Mulligan (N Chance)	20-1	14-1	20-1	25-1
Nahthen Lad (Mrs J Pitman)	25-1	16-1	14-1	16-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Thursday, 13 March)

RACING RESULTS

LINGFIELD

1.00: 1. [illegible] (C Rutter) 15-2; 2. Bagshot [illegible]; 3. Bon Secret 3-1. 14 ran. ½, 2½. ([illegible], Newbury). Tote: £11.90; £2.80, [illegible], £1.40. DF: £[illegible].60. CSF: £21.54. [illegible] £7.20.

1.30: 1. EFFERVESCENCE (Dane O'Neill) 7-4 fav; 2. [illegible] 2-1; 3. Forgotten Times 12-1. 6 ran. 1½, 2½. (R Hannon, East Everleigh). Tote: £2.40; £1.20, £1.40. DF: £1.90. CSF: £5.33.

2.00: 1. RAWI (D Holland) 7-4 jt fav; 2. Zeteya 3-1; 3. Katabolic 7-4 jt fav. 5 ran. Nk, 3½. (Miss Gay Kelleway, Whitcombe). Tote: £2.70; £1.10, £2.50. DF: £5.10. CSF: £7.21.

2.30: 1. BAROSSA VALLEY (D Sweeney) 9-2; 2. Silly Jig 12-1; 3. Father Dan 7-1. 11 ran. 7-2 fav Master Beveled (5th). 2, 4. (P Butler, Lewes). Tote: £6.30; £1.60, £6.20, £2.30. DF: £20.70. CSF: £58.34. Tricast: £356.55. Trio: £53.70.

3.00: 1. THE WYANDOTTE INN (F Lynch) 4-9 fav; 2. [illegible] 4-1; 3. Windborn 4-1. 3 ran. 7, ½. (R Hollinshead, Upper Longdon). Tote: £1.40. DF: £1.60. CSF: £2.41.

3.30: 1. YET AGAIN (S Sanders) 10-11 fav; 2. [illegible] Rocket 9-1; 3. Persian Conquest 4-1. 7 ran. 3½, 8. (Miss Gay Kelleway, Whitcombe). Tote: £2.10; £1.70, £2.20. DF: £4.80. CSF: £9.38.

Jackpot: £1,197.90.
Placepot: £12.70. Quadpot: £11.50.
Place 6: £12.19. Place 5: £9.17.

LEOPARDSTOWN

12.45: 1. MR BAXTER BASICS (R Whitmore) 9-1; 2. Pauls Run 5-1; 3. Foyle Wanderer 14-1. 12 ran. 7-4 fav Ganys Lock. 4½, 8. Tote: £9.90; £2.10, £1.70, £11.80. Reverse: £55.60. CSF: £57.88. NR: Take The Rap.

1.15: 1. THEATREWORLD (C F Swan) 2-1; 2. Hill Society 8-1; 3. Cockney Lad 6-4 fav. 8 ran. 5, 1½. Tote: £2.80; £1.60, £3.30. Reverse: £9.50. CSF: £17.58.

1.45: 1. FINCHPALM (F J Flood) 7-1; 2. Glint Of Eagles 5-2 fav; 3. The Vendor 33-1. 12 ran. 2, 14. Tote: £11.10; £2.10, £1.30, £26.70. Reverse: £18.80. CSF: £27.24.

2.15: 1. COLLON LEADER (Mr G Elliott) [illegible]; 2. Lady Daisy 2-1 fav; 3. Fellow Trix [illegible]. 8 ran. ½, 20. Tote: £3.10; £1.10, £[illegible], £2.10. Reverse: £4.20. CSF: £9.50. Tricast: £39.86. NR: All The Vowels, Ancient Hi[illegible], Swing Song.

2.45: 1. OLUMO (Mr A J Martin) 8-1; 2. Scout Around 4-5 fav; 3. Time To Lead 4-1. 6 ran. Nk, 7. Tote: £13.30; £5.00, £1.10. Reverse: £10.80. CSF: £15.80. NR: [illegible].

3.15: 1. BANNER GALE (C O'Dwyer) [illegible]; 2. Vulpin De Laugere 11-8 fav; 3. Orphan Express 5-1. 8 ran. 13, [illegible]. Tote: £4.[illegible]; £2.00, £1.40. Reverse: £[illegible]. CSF: £[illegible]. NR: Dee Ell.

3.45: 1. FURNITUREVILLE (Mr D McGoona) 5-2; 2. Celebrity Status [illegible]; 3. Droichead Lapeen 10-1. 2-1 fav [illegible]. 8 ran. 2, 2. Tote: £3.40; £1.50, £[illegible]. Reverse: £58.20. CSF: £38.55. NR: [illegible], [illegible] Away Sailor.

Germany did not get anywhere near the credit they deserved given that it was probably their weakest squad for years

With the year drawing to a close, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the year's major football event. Everyone, it seems, has had their say on England's performance, but in all the fuss over the achievement of Terry Venables' team in so narrowly failing to reach the final, what about the winners?

To my mind Germany did not get anywhere near the credit they deserved, given the fact that it was probably the weakest squad they have produced for years. Added to which, Berti Vogts, the German coach, had to carry a horrendous injury crisis even before they arrived here.

Yes, *Euro 96* was a great spectacle, and our boys did superbly, but just as all the flag-waving was finished and Trafalgar Square eventually emptied, so the old Lufthansa Tri-star was once again touching down with the spoils safely locked aboard.

Nevertheless, lucky or not, the Germans did it again. As Gary Player said: "The more I practise the luckier I get." And from all I hear, they do love to practice. Obviously you can't believe everything you hear, but on this occasion, my source is impeccable.

Colin Bell – not be of Maine Road fame – was an apprentice and then a professional footballer who never quite made the grade at Leicester City. In 1982, when he was 21 and anxious to play football anywhere, he was released on a free transfer.

Anywhere just happened to be Germany and he eventually finished up at Koblenz, who were then a lower division outfit. Eight years on and all of 30 years old, he became player-manager at Koblenz. Since then he has taken them through the lower leagues to the German Second Division and established himself as one of the brightest young managers' working there.

In the eight years in question he has also had to get himself qualified to work as a manager. What is the alternative to qualification in Germany? There isn't one, unless you are Kaiser Franz. Apparently, Beckenbauer's honorary exception was enthusiastically greeted by German coaches. They reckoned he still had to get results and, they argue, he did: he went on and won the World Cup. Colin Bell would argue that the management and coaching system helped him, and helped the players to pocket yet another World Cup trophy.

HOWARD WILKINSON

"Teutonic thoroughness" is no cliché as far as aspiring managers are concerned. The "B" license involves a three-week course and allows you to coach up to the German Fourth Division. Acquiring an "A" licence takes a little longer; mind you it does entitle you to manage up to the lofty heights of the *Zweite Liga* (Second Division), provided you have had at least two years' practical experience after acquiring your "B" licence.

Then comes the "biggy", the manager's licence. This must come at the end of a course lasting at least 10 or 12 weeks, mustn't it? Brace yourselves: to earn the licence you must complete a seven-month full-time course at the Sports University in Cologne. Students are allowed back to their clubs at weekends and there is also a seven-week attachment to a *Bundesliga* club.

But does it all matter, all this theory and education? Historical facts are not theory, they argue. Germany are the most successful international country in Europe, if not the world.

All of which is very different to our so-called "professionalism". Germany recognises the absolute vital necessity to get it right between the ages of eight and 21. If we are to capitalise on the current boom here, then we must do likewise. Anybody can learn to coach, but coaching of our most valuable assets should not be available to just anybody. We wouldn't let it happen at school, would we?

Is there a secret to Germany's success? Is it a mystery known only to them? Have the Norwegians and the Dutch infiltrated and nicked information they shouldn't be privy to?

Apparently not. The German football nation, perhaps the German sporting nation, has a "coaching mentality", and that by definition means a practising mentality. Excellence is a fact not a figment of misguided thinking.

The bigger the club, the more coaches they employ. Bayern Munich, for instance, would seek to employ more manager's licence holders than anyone else. They want their players at all ages and all levels to have the best available. Players from Kinder to Klinsmann view coaches as professionals due professional respect. As a percentage of the population, Germany has probably double the amount of players registered that we have. The clubs are the focal point of learning and teaching.

Colin Bell is convinced the key factor in Germany's continued success is the quality and thoroughness of the coaches privileged to work under licence. The players get the best coaches and the best practice and they reckon the more they practise the luckier they get. That's their story, anyway, and they are sticking to it.

Men of letters court chance to pool their wits

Greg Wood sees darts continue its emergence from the gloom of the late Eighties in the emotional atmosphere of an Essex night-club

Dennis Priestley shows his menace in the WDC World Championships at the Circus Tavern, Purfleet, yesterday Photograph: Peter Jay

It was shortly after 1.00pm and Dennis "The Menace" Priestley was ready to make his entrance into the Circus Tavern for the first match of the day in the WDC World Darts Championship, but something was not quite right. Despite the best endeavours of several smoke machines, not to mention the substantial puffing majority in the audience, you could still see the board, so a man with a mobile fog-generator – who was clearly being paid by the cough – was dispatched to add a final cloud or three. By the time he had finished, visibility was down to six inches. At last, somewhere to the left of the acrid fogbank, the stage was set, for darts Sky-style.

And that, it must be said, is the only style worth bothering with. In each of the four years since the WDC breakaway, the presentation at the Purfleet venue has grown a little more garish, but it is none the worse for that. When darts fell into a late-80s slump even more drastic than the one in the housing market, the big names felt a new ruling body was the only answer, and now their decision appears to be paying off.

After lagging behind the prize-money on offer in the other world championship, the Embassy event at Frimley Green, the WDC tournament now offers £45,000 to the winner, the largest prize in darts. The formula – gladiatorial entrances, young women in swimsuits, bright lights and thumping disco beats – might not appeal to the old-timers in the snug of the Ferret and Trouser-Leg, but darts, you feel, is finally on the way back.

And it has much to offer, not least a degree of audience participation which few other sports would encourage in these nervous times. Spectators are encouraged to line the route to the stage, exchanging handshakes and backslaps with their favourites, while the kids pucker up in the hope of a kiss, cheerfully unaware that, if they breathe in at the wrong moment, it will probably leave them both drunk and choking. It is rather difficult to imagine Nick Faldo indulging in similar pleasantries on the first tee at St Andrews.

Priestley's route yesterday was relatively trouble-free, but such was the crush when Eric Bristow appeared the previous evening that it seemed odds-against him even making it to the oche. Lucky for him, the cynics would have said beforehand, such has been Bristow's decline from the mid-80s heyday when he was all but unbeatable and one of the best-known faces in Britain.

Yet despite setting out as a 150-1 chance to win the tournament, the "Crafty Cockney" swept past Bob Anderson, the No 3 seed, finishing the final leg from 276 with four straight treble-20s and double 18. It was as if he had never been away, and at the final double, the Tavern descended into ecstatic bedlam.

But as even Bristow later admitted, "you can't have two world championships in any sport", and indeed, the plague of acronyms which has infested darts as thoroughly as it has boxing may at last be responding to treatment. The British Darts Organisation, which banned the renegade players from all its "open" events four years ago, is on the receiving end of a World Darts Council writ alleging restraint of trade which, after a delay of almost two years, will finally reach a court in June. Close observers of darts politics feel that a reconciliation between the two organisations is as inevitable as it is overdue.

What is certain, though, is that no matter how the sport arranges itself in the coming months, Priestley, who made impressively short work of Steve Brown yesterday, and Phil Taylor, who he is seeded to meet in Sunday's final, are the finest two players in the world, and have been throughout the 90s. Their rivalry, which must be among the most enduring in any sport, is a friendly one, but there is an added edge this year, as Taylor attempts to equal Bristow's record of five world titles.

"If he plays very well and beats me, and I don't play really badly, then I'm happy, and I sure it's the same for him," Priestley says. "It's a matter of putting pressure on at the right time. You can score well and then miss a double and then suddenly he'll get a 156 out-shot and you're left regretting it all. Last year in the final I played excellent darts and it wasn't enough, but maybe if we get there this year, the pressure of going for three in a row will get to him a little."

But even another classic like their match 12 months ago will not shift the prejudice which still persists in some areas of the British sporting audience. "There are obviously some people here who look at darts and see cloth caps," Priestley says, "but if you go to America or Australia it doesn't have that stigma, and you find that there are lawyers and doctors playing."

Whether the doctors would approve of the smoke machines, of course, is another matter entirely.

Wiseman's seasonal message

Football

GLENN MOORE

Everybody is at it these days, John Major, Tony Blair, Paddy Ashdown... Keith Wiseman. Who? The new chairman of the Football Association and the only one of the aforementioned quartet to already have his election in the bag.

Wiseman joined the politicians in sending out a new year message. This is one of the FA's modern traditions (you can tell it is modern as it is not yet sponsored) and was last year used as a chance for Sir Bert Millichip, Wiseman's predecessor, to offer a sprig of mistletoe to the rebellious barons of the Premiership.

As Wiseman was elected from the ranks of the Premiership (though not by all of them) he is able to write from a position of relative authority on the need to "balance the demands of the different sections of the game in the interests of football as a whole".

He adds: "I am committed to a new partnership at the heart of our football between those who run the professional game and those who administer grassroots football.

"The best structure for our domestic game; our relations with European football; the development of the game at the grassroots will surely be among the early subjects I will be discussing with colleagues in 1997."

Wiseman then stresses that "the top clubs have a huge part to play" in helping England qualify for the next World Cup adding "we will seek to ensure we are at one with them on the key issues".

Wiseman also draws attention to the FA's successful running of *Euro 96* and its bid for the 2006 World Cup; its pleasure at the decision to turn Wembley into the new National Stadium; and its desire to increase Asian participation in the game and address the role of new technology – "its use, and mis-use".

The letter is formally sent to the 89 members of the FA Council which may be why it contains no mention of plans for structural reform of the unwieldy and anachronistic Council itself (one member each for the Army, RAF, Royal Navy, Oxford University, Cambridge University, Independent Schools, New Zealand FA and Australia, no member for the Vauxhall Conference or football supporters, one for women's football).

As they put it alongside the Queen's congratulatory telegram on the mantlepiece the councillors may reflect that one set of turkeys continue to survive Christmas.

Leeds' double signing

Rugby League

Leeds Rhinos yesterday filled the two remaining places on their overseas quota by bringing the highly rated Australian pair, Martin Masella and Wayne Collins, to the Super League.

Masella, a prop forward who has played for Illawarra, Balmain and South Sydney, represented Tonga in last year's World Cup. He was originally recommended to Leeds by Mike McClennan, the former St Helens coach who was in charge of the Tongan national side.

Collins, a former St George and South Queensland Crushers hooker, was a member of the Canberra Raiders squad beaten 30-18 by Widnes in the World Club Challenge at Old Trafford in 1989.

Tony Fisher, who guided Doncaster to the top flight two years ago, has been appointed as coach by the Second Division club for the second time. He replaces the Australian Peter Regan, who moved to Batley in October.

TODAY'S NUMBER

11,040,271

The amount in pounds awarded to the sport of sailing from National Lottery funds since the start of the Lottery in March last year. In addition, Dragon Boat racing has received £6,621.

SNOW REPORT

Thomas Cook

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Around the resorts

Resort	Comment	Area open	Last snow	Low cm	Upp cm	Forecast
ANDORRA						
Arinsal	Hard packed low down	100%	28.12	60	90	Overcast
Grau Roig	Mainly good	100%	28.12	90	140	Cloudy
Pas de la Casa	Lower runs skiable	100%	28.12	90	140	Some sun
AUSTRIA						
St Anton	Firm base, fresh top cover	100%	23.12	45	190	Overcast
Seefeld	Icy or hard snow all levels	100%	25.12	30	70	Sunny
CANADA						
Lake Louise	Powder, groomed	100%	23.12	110	120	Snow
FRANCE						
Alpe d'Huez	Hard, packed	85%	25.12	80	240	Unsettled
Chamonix	Good conditions	99%	25.12	20	270	Sunny
La Plagne	Good conditions on top	96%	26.12	95	210	Unsettled
ITALY						
Bormio	Some artificial snow	100%	23.12	10	130	Variable
Cervinia	Great at all levels	100%	21.12	150	300	Variable
Cortina	Some artificial snow	100%	23.12	10	90	Worsening
SWITZERLAND						
Davos	Superb at all levels	100%	26.12	55	140	Sunny
St Moritz	Crisp and dry	100%	26.12	85	240	Clear
UNITED STATES						
Aspen	Powder/packed powder	99%	26.12	110	125	Snow
Crested Butte	Powder/packed powder	100%	26.12	[illegible]	205	Snow

SPORTING DIGEST

American football

NFL play-offs: Pittsburgh 42 Indianapolis 14; San Francisco 14 Philadelphia 0.

Basketball

Worthing Bears will be without their American forward James Hamilton, the leading rebounder in the Budweiser League at 11.6 per game, for at least three weeks because of an ankle injury.

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Chester Jets 102 Bullets/Worthing Bears 75; Manchester Giants 63 Derby Storm 62; Sheffield Sharks 79 Playboy IV Leopards 88; Peugeot Bullets Birmingham 90 Thames Valley Tigers 87.

NBA: New Jersey 110 Indiana 102 (ot); Miami 95 Milwaukee 94; LA Lakers 115 Philadelphia 102; Portland 110 San Antonio 86.

Cricket

TOUR MATCHES (Durban, SA: one day): Natal 286 for 5 (55 overs); India 236 for 7 (55 overs). Natal won by 50 runs. (Newcastle, Aus): Pakistan 186 for 9 (32 overs) (Zahoor Elahi 69); Hunter Invitation XI 161 (31.2 overs; Saqlain Mushtaq 6-28). Pakistan won by 25 runs.

SUPERSPORT SERIES (Second day of four): East London, SA: Transvaal 291 (R E Veenstra 135no, A J Hall 78; P J Botha 5-38); Border 35 for 0.

Darts

RED BAND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Purfleet, Essex): Group A: E Bristow (Eng) bt B Anderson (Eng) 3-1. Group B: G Stoddart (Eng) bt L Butler (US) 3-1. Group C: D Smith (Eng) bt N Gizocki (Eng) 3-0. Group D: P Taylor (Eng) bt C Mason (Eng) 3-0. Group F: J Harvey (Scot) bt P Lim (US) 3-2. Group H: D Priestley (Eng) bt S Brown (US) 3-0.

Football

Brian Kerr, the manager of the League of Ireland club St Patrick's, has been appointed full-time manager of the Republic of Ireland Under-18 and Under-16 squads on a four-year contract. He takes up his post on 1 February.

The last 10,000 tickets for England's World Cup qualifier with Italy on 12 February will go on sale on Thursday from 9am for telephone callers only via the Wembley box office. No tickets are available to people who travel in person to Wembley.

The Italian *Serie A* club Perugia have appointed Nevio Scala, the former Parma coach, as their new coach until June 2000, replacing Giovanni Galeone, who was told to leave after the club's recent 0-0 draw against Bologna.

ICIS LEAGUE Premier Division: Postponed: Oxford City v Staines.

IRISH LEAGUE COCA-COLA FLOODLIT CUP First round first leg: Postponed: Omagh v Portadown.

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE RE-ARRANGED DATES: Sat 4 Jan: Walsall v Blackpool (from 28 Dec). Tue 7 Jan: Chester v Rochdale (from 26 Dec). Tue 21 Jan: York v Peterborough (from 4 Jan). Tues 25 Feb: Wigan v Darlington (from 28 Dec).

Hockey

HA DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENT (Bristol) Third Day: Under 17: North East 1 East 2; North West 0 South East 0; West 0 South West 0. Tournament abandoned snow. Under-15: North East 1 East 4; North West 0 South East 4; South West 2 West 1; North East 0 South West 3; Midlands 1 East 5. Winners: South West; runners up: East.

AEWHA TERRITORIAL TOURNAMENT (Milton Keynes Stadium) Third Day. Under-21: West 2 East 2; North 0 South 2; Midlands 2 West 1. Final placings: 1 East 8pts; 2 South 7; 3 Midlands 6; 4 West 4; 5 North 3. Under-18: Midlands 0 North 1; South 0 East 4; West 0 Midlands 5. Final placings: 1 East 12pts; 2 North 9; 3 Midlands 6; 4 South 3; 5 West 0. Under-16: East 1 South 2; West 2 North 1; Midlands 5 East 0. Final placings: 1 Midlands 12pts; 2 East 6; 3 West 6; 4 South 4; 5 North 1.

Ice hockey

The Colorado Avalanche center Peter Forsberg who underwent leg surgery this weekend, will be out of action until after the 18 January All-Star game. Forsberg underwent minor surgery on Saturday to remove a large fluid collection in the quadricep muscle of his left leg.

NHL: Philadelphia 4 Calgary 2; Montreal 2 Florida 1; St Louis 4 Boston 2; Chicago 4 Hartford 3; Colorado 3 Dallas 2. Postponed: San Jose at Vancouver.

SUPERLEAGUE: Nottingham 9 Newcastle 5.

PREMIER LEAGUE: Guildford 7 Slough 4; Kingston 2 Solihull 7; Medway 0 Swindon 12.

NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE: Whitley 4 Blackburn 5.

Rugby League

St Helens will have a pitch inspection today to decide whether the New Year's Day Norweb Challenge second leg against Wigan goes ahead. If the freeze causes a postponement, the match will be re-staged at Knowsley Road, probably on Sunday, but will not be moved to Central Park, which has undersoil heating. Wigan won the first leg 32-22 at Central Park on Boxing Day.

The Salford forwards Cliff Eccles and Mark Lee have undergone elbow operations, but will be fit for the start of the new Super League season in mid-March.

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP Second round draw: BRK v Egremont; Lock Lane v Hawcoat; Wooloton v Keighley Albion; Siddal v Beverley; Ovenden or Hensingham v Barrow Island; Starbaugh v Leigh Miners; York Acorn v Mayfield or Eccles; Norland v East Leeds; Valley Central v Milford; Dudley Hill v Dewsbury Moor; Wigan St Patricks or Halton Simms Cross v Blackbrook; Oulton or Ideal ABI v West Bowling; Leeds Univ v Thatto Heath; Hull Dockers v Eastmoor; Clayton or Normanton v Saddleworth or Ellenbrook Rangers; Rochdal v Wigan St Judes or Wigan Rose Bridge; West Hull v Haydock; Mossgreen or Durham Univ v Thornhill (*Matches to be played 11th or 12th January*).

Rugby Union

Although Llanelli's Stradey Park pitch has been pronounced fit for tonight's match against Italy the club will inspect the pitch again at 11.0 this morning, with the game due to kick-off at 2.30. Franco Botica, of New Zealand, was pleased with the pitch condition after practising his goal-kicking and will be one of the six internationals in the home line-up.

The New Year's Day game between Emerging Wales and the US Eagles has been switched from Rodney Parade, Newport, to the National Ground, Cardiff Arms Park because of adverse weather conditions. The Bath forward Dan Lyle will lead the Eagles, a side which features six players currently with British clubs including the Reading pair Mark Scharrenberg and Andre Bachelet, Blackheath hooker Tom Billups and Pontypridd back row Rob Lumkong.

Moseley have signed the 28-year-old hooker Damien Gerraghty, from the New Zealand provincial side Wellington. He could make his debut in Saturday's league match against Waterloo at The Reddings.

Simon Beetham, the 24-year-old centre from Leicester Tigers, yesterday joined the Courage League Two club Nottingham.

Sailing

The road to Sydney 2000 started with a win at Spain's Palamos Regatta in the Laser Class yesterday for British 1996 silver medallist Ben Ainslie, with another Briton, Iain Percy, in second place.

Snooker

DR MARTENS EUROPEAN LEAGUE (Irthlingborough) Group B: Davis bt J Higgins (Scot) 6-2.

Tennis

HOPMAN CUP (Perth, WA) Group A: United States bt France 2-1. (US names first) Singles: Chanda Rubin bt M Pierce 6-4 6-1; J Gimelstob lost to G Forget 6-2 3-6 3-6. Doubles: Gimelstob and Rubin bt Forget and Pierce 3-6 6-3 6-2. Group B: Switzerland bt Romania 2-1. (Swiss names first) Singles: M Hingis bt I Spirlea 7-5 6-2; M Rosset lost to A Voinea wto. Doubles: M Rosset and M Hingis bt A Voinea 3-6 7-5 6-3. South Africa bt Germany 3-0. (SA names first) Singles: A Coetzer bt P Begerow 6-0 7-5; W Ferreira bt B Karbacher 6-4 6-4. Doubles: Ferreira and Coetzer bt Karbacher and Begerow 6-3 6-4.

AUSTRALIAN MEN'S HARDCOURT CHAMPIONSHIP (Adelaide) Singles, first round: D Prinosil (Ger) bt S Draddell (Q) Rep) 6-3 6-2; J Novak (Cz Rep) bt M Tebbutt (Aus) 7-5 1-6 7-6; A Cherkasov (Rus) bt R Furlan (It) 4-6 6-4 6-4; A O'Brien (US) bt M Goellner (Ger) 6-7 6-4 7-6; M Woodforde (Aus) bt R Fromberg (Aus) 6-3 6-3; B Black (Zim) bt K Carlsen (Den) 6-4 6-3; M Tillstrom (Swe) bt Y Kafelnikov (Rus) 6-2 6-2; T Woodbridge (Aus) bt D Vacek (Cz Rep) 4-6 6-3 6-3.

GOLD COAST CLASSIC (Hope Island, Aus) Singles, first round: E Likhovtseva (Rus) bt P Suarez (Arg) 6-1 7-5; A Sugiyama (Japan) bt N Miyagi (Japan) 5-7 6-1 6-1; B Rittner (Ger) bt S Farina (It) 7-5 6-4; R McQuillan (Aus) bt Shu-Ting Wang (Tai) 6-7 6-4 6-3; R Grande (It) bt N Kijimuta (Japan) 6-2 6-1; A Elwood (Aus) bt S Hack (Ger) 7-5 6-2.

QATAR OPEN TOURNAMENT (Doha) Singles, first round: P Fredriksson (Swe) bt K Alami (Mor) 6-2 6-2; M Larsson (Swe) bt T Enqvist (Swe) 6-4 7-5; T Henman (GB) bt H Wiltschnig (Aut) 6-3 6-2; M Gustafsson (Swe) bt J Burillo (Sp) 4-6 6-1 6-4.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Football

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Bray Wanderers v Home Farm Everton (2.0).

Rugby Union

TOUR MATCH: Llanelli v Italy (2.30).

Other sports

DARTS: WDC World Championship (Purfleet, Essex).

Golding crawls to glory

Sailing

After making little or no progress for 12 hours, Mike Golding yesterday added a win in the second leg of the BT Challenge to the one he notched up on the first leg from Southampton, **writes Stuart Alexander.**

At the end of 6,600 miles from Rio de Janeiro to Wellington, Golding's Group 4 ran into light airs and what had been a substantial lead was cut to two hours and 52 minutes as Andy Hindley (Save the Children) closed in. Simon Walker (Toshiba) crossed third, 16hr 20min 11sec behind Golding, with Mark Lodge (Motorola) the only other yacht expected to finish last night.

The rest of the 14 are spread over 400 miles, watchful for any after-effects of Hurricane Fergus but pleased to see a maximum of 30 knots to speed the next group to a New Year celebration.

Pete Goss is expected to drop the rescued Raphael Dinelli in Hobart next Monday as the Vendée Globe leader, Christophe Augin, continues his unchallenged lead with 9,600 miles to the finish in Les Sables d'Olonne.

Mervyn Wheatley (Thermopylae) holds a four-mile lead over Andrew "Spud" Spedding (Blackadder) 150 miles into the fifth leg of the Clipper '96 race. It takes the eight 60-footers some 4,000 miles from the Galapagos Islands to Honolulu.

Henman under no illusions

Tennis

Tim Henman, the British No 1, began his 1997 campaign two days early when he beat the Austrian qualifier Herbert Wiltschnig 6-3, 6-2 in the first round of the Qatar Open in Doha yesterday.

Henman, currently ranked 29 in the world but hoping to break into the top 20 during the next 12 months, had few problems but admitted that the new year might prove more difficult than 1996.

"I think next year will be tougher because all the top players know my game now," he said.

Thomas Enqvist, the second seed from Sweden, was beaten 6-4, 7-5 by his compatriot Magnus Larsson. The elimination of Enqvist was another setback for the organisers, who had already lost Boris Becker and Richard Krajicek through injury.

In Australia, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the holder, was another big-name casualty, beaten 6-2, 6-2 by Sweden's Mikael Tillstrom in the first round of the Australian Hardcourt Championships in Adelaide.

sport

Professionalism hit British rugby this year, bringing internecine warfare, a Test epidemic and an invasion of foreign players. **Chris Hewett** says the game must move forward in 1997 to survive

Goose that laid the powder keg

Rugby's golden goose has proved an elusive creature in 1996, a survival specialist with an instinct for self-preservation far more acute than anything displayed by Gerald Davies or David Campese in their heydays. It has been hunted relentlessly by obsolescent committee men, cheque book-wielding business barons and avaricious players who appear to have studied economics under Walter Mitty. Formidable enemies indeed, yet the goose continues to draw breath.

But for how much longer? It is astonishing that domestic rugby still basks in the warm glow of an unprecedented boom in popularity given the best efforts of those at the summit of the British game – and the English one in particular – to dash it to smithereens on the twin altars of petty power-mongering and grotesque greed.

Even now, England's senior clubs are girding their loins for a fierce argument with the Rugby Football Union over the Courage League structure – not next season's structure, mark you, but this season's. The First Division protectionists want a 12-team top flight with two relegation slots while the governing body is pushing a 10-team arrangement under which no fewer than four clubs would wave good-bye to their precious élite status.

When the rival battalions finally strike a formal deal on the financial and broadcasting disputes that have dominated the headlines for 12 long months – the so-called negotiators from both sides hope to settle in January, although no one is prepared to say which January – the relegation issue will still be there, bubbling away underneath a facade of good fellowship and reconciliation.

Yet the real threat to rugby's development as a major spectator sport is overkill on the international stage. This is not a little local difficulty, like the RFU-Epruc (English Professional Rugby Union Clubs) rumpus in England, but a worldwide epidemic. So many Test matches are scheduled to be played in 1997 that there is a serious danger of reducing to nothing the sense of occasion that has always been the single most important foundation stone of the sport's mass appeal.

Ridiculously, the International Board has sanctioned no fewer than 46 full Tests involving the traditional Big Eight nations – the four home countries, France, New Zealand, South Africa and Australia – during the coming calendar year, and that number is likely to leave 50 behind once each country has finalised its plans. It amounts to a major Test each and every weekend, enough to sap the interest levels of the most fanatical rugby follower.

It does not end there. When you include the stronger second division countries in this morass of activity – Canada, Argentina, Italy and the Pacific Islands – the total number of matches approaches the 70 mark. Suddenly the golden goose begins to resemble one of those force-fed unfortunates on the farms of southern France.

England, alone, will play Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and New Zealand again on successive Saturdays between 15 November and 6 December, a fact that has stirred up a degree of renewed hostility from fellow members of the Five Nations committee who have yet to forgive Twickenham fully for its self-serving duplicity in negotiating a unilateral broadcasting deal last April.

Jack Rowell, the national coach, repeatedly insists that if his side is to mount a meaningful challenge to the superpowers of the southern hemisphere, it needs to play them on a regular basis. Is four times in four weeks regular enough for you, Jack?

> Global village culture is much in evidence at club level, as Rowell is finding to his cost

The pitfalls of excess were nakedly apparent as recently as last month, when Scotland failed lamentably to sell out Murrayfield for the visit of John Eales and his Wallabies. Even more disturbingly, the Welsh fell short of full houses at the Arms Park for both the Test with the Aussies – the game in which the home-grown hero Jonathan Davies returned to international colours – and the match against South Africa, one of the two most marketable outfits on the planet.

Quite how many pitch up at Cardiff for next week's match with the United States is anyone's guess but few are likely to be knocked unconscious in the box office frenzy.

Global village culture is much in evidence at club level, too, as Rowell is finding to his cost as he searches high and low for English-qualified talent.

It is a well-documented fact that the outside-half cupboard is virtually bare: of the 12 first-choice stand-offs in the First Division, only five are available for red rose selection (and one of those, Mike Catt of Bath, is a South African by birth). Given that Leicester and Harlequins are about to draft in Joel Stransky, a Springbok, and Thierry Lacroix, a Frenchman, respectively, the options will soon decrease by another 40 per cent.

Further examination reveals that in at least two other key positions, middle jumper and open-side flanker, the choice is very nearly as limited. On an average Courage League weekend, 50 per cent or more of those performing in each position will be foreign imports.

It does not take an astrophysicist to work out that the situation cannot be allowed to continue unchecked, and if the new management company about to take over the day-to-day running of senior club rugby in England has any sense at all, it will make this issue its No 1 priority.

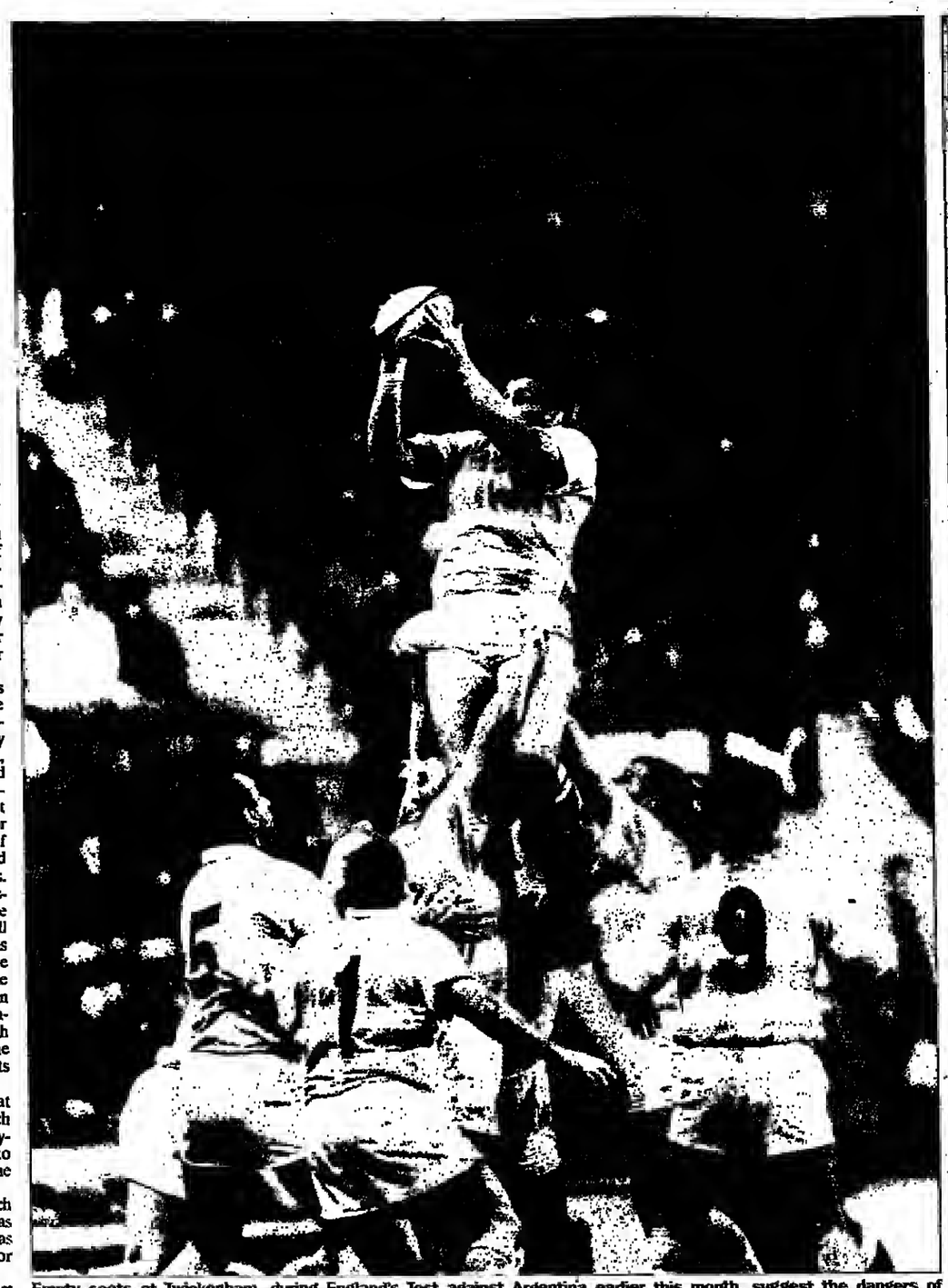
For all that, there are encouraging signs that the club game here is flourishing under the demands of professionalism. Rugby is more popular in London and the Midlands than ever before – just look at the crowds at The Stoop, Loftus Road, Welford Road and Franklins Gardens – while Newcastle, bankrolled by Sir John Hall but made flesh with impressive single-mindedness by Rob Andrew, are emerging as a real power in the land.

With Sale also cutting plenty of ice on the other side of the Pennines, the northern outlook is brighter than many feared when salary packets first replaced boot money.

As in all business ventures, quality control is of paramount importance: for instance, the Heineken European Cup, the wild success story of the season, requires careful nurturing while, conversely, the almost unimaginably pointless Anglo-Welsh tournament deserves a thorough soaking with weedkiller. It is of no conceivable use to anyone, so get rid of it.

This has been a bitterly frustrating year of wasted opportunities, undermined by bad faith and endless procrastination. In 1997 British rugby needs to break the logjam with sharp minds, quick wits and, above all, an injection of energy.

If that proves beyond the badged and blazered buffers of the four home unions, sack the lot of them and beadhunt a couple of old All Blacks to run the show. If we are going to take up residence in the global village, let's make it work for us rather than against us.



Empty seats at Twickenham, during England's Test against Argentina earlier this month, suggest the dangers of overkill for spectators are already with us in the expansion of international competition Photograph: David Ashdown

[illegible] and fears of [illegible] insiders

The coach

BOB DWYER – Australian World Cup-winning coach, now at league leaders Leicester.

"I've spent just half the season in English rugby but I believe the biggest problem is that the demands on players in the professional era are nowhere near big enough. If you're being paid £70,000 for a season's performances for England, you should be in tip-top shape, but it strikes me that some of those at the most lucrative end of the game are well short of that. My other concern is that people here misunderstand how good a player needs to be to perform effectively at Test level; some of the current England squad are not within cooee, as we say back home. The sound assessment of talent is absolutely essential in the development of a strong national side, as is mental and physical conditioning. If you get that right, you will go a long way because everything else is here on your doorstep – when I was a young coach, England was a citadel of physical education. You have heaps of information at your fingertips, but you really have to improve the application of that information."

The fan

MARTIN GOULD – Wasps supporter.

"My main concerns about the game in England are twofold; that the influx of foreign players while very exciting for the supporter, is beginning to have a negative effect on the development of our own youngsters and that the paying spectator is taking far too much of a biding in the pocket.

On the first point, my own club much shoulder a share of the blame like every other – we have two Scots in our second row, a Western Samoan and a Canadian in our back division. At the start of the season, Alex King couldn't get a game at outside-half because Gareth Rees had been brought in. Had it not been for early injuries, Alex might not be in the England squad now. The obsession with expensive imports is dangerous and limits will have to be imposed.

From the supporter's point of view, £15 at the turnstiles is hitting us hard. Soccer fans may be used to paying that sort of money but the sudden leap in prices to finance players' inflated wage bills really does stick in the craw."

The player

JON CALLARD – Bath and England full-back.

"The obvious source of discomfort at the way our game is going is the influx of foreign talent. I am perfectly aware of its short-term value – players like Michael Lynagh, Joel Stransky and Inge Tuigamala and the rest can only raise the profile of domestic rugby and if that brings new supporters through the turnstiles, all well and good.

But in the long term, what good will it do us as a rugby-playing nation? Very little, I'm afraid. There is an awful lot of home-grown talent out there that needs to be developed and exposure at the top level is the key element in that. It would be self-defeating if good young players were forced to perform at a lower level – or give up the game altogether – because their progress was being blocked by big names from overseas.

On another note, I would like to see us experiment with two referees as a means of cracking down on offences like offside and killing the ball. It is still too easy for one side to play entirely negatively and get away with it."

The administrator

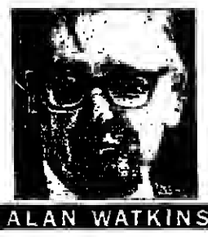
MIKE SMITH – chief executive, Saracens.

"The first thing we have to do to ensure our future is forget our immediate past. We have to put last year's in-fighting behind us, encourage the personalities involved to draw a line under the conflict and get on with building up for the Five Nations and, in the longer term, the 1999 World Cup.

The public perception of rugby was sky high until this season, and I think the difficulties between the clubs and the Rugby Football Union has affected gates both at domestic and international level. We cannot allow that situation to continue.

Unfortunately, the RFU and the clubs have been trying to run two separate businesses with the same raw materials in terms of players. Both sides need to maximise their earning potential but instead of agreeing a common approach, there has been division. We are now in the world of entertainment and many clubs, Saracens included, have taken that on board by improving facilities for players and supporters alike. It is all about developing the product and for that to happen, everyone must pull in the same direction."

What a gamble, what a lottery, what a farce!



ALAN WATKINS

The last four months have seen the biggest changes in rugby I have known. Some of them have been both exciting and overdue: others neither. But what has become apparent with every Saturday afternoon is that not only the quality but the very nature of the game depends on the referee. It is his interpretation of the laws, as they are called in England — the rules, almost everywhere else — which determines what happens on the field.

So far, so obvious, you may say dismissively. But it is not obvious at all when you come to think about it. Thus football is a simple game, which is why it is so popular, whose only complicated area is the application of the offside rule. Here the referee has two qualified linesmen virtually to apply it on his behalf. Tennis is even simpler, where the only difficulty lies in judging whether the ball was inside, on or outside a white line. Here electronic devices have come to the aid of the umpires.

Cricket, to be sure, is more complicated. In a scholarship examination which I sat at 18 I had (in a question I chose voluntarily) to explain it to a foreigner. I was sorry I tried. But though the rules are complex, they are coherent and comprehensible. There are few areas of latitude: such as what is "unfair play". The principal difficulty is to establish what happened. Accordingly additional officials have been introduced to help the umpires.

Rugby is different. There is no agreement about what the rules mean or how they should be applied. Brian Moore would not have been sent off for raking or stamping if he had been playing for Auckland against Canterbury rather than for Richmond against Sale.

European, certainly British Isles, referees take a different view. They will not permit an attacking player to move a defending player with his boot in an attempt to get at the ball. The most they are prepared to allow is a penalty to the attacking side. But this is frequently unjust.

Consider: a player is tackled but the tackler fails to "turn" him. The tackled player, by this time on the ground, legitimately tries to make the ball available to his own side. Forwards pile in from both teams. In these circumstances, which we see repeated every five minutes every Saturday, there cannot logically be a "right" or a "wrong" side of the ball. From the point of view of the tackled player's team, he is on the right side; from that of the tackler's team, on the wrong.

As I have said, the referee may award a penalty to the tackler's team. But he has, in theory anyway, an entirely different option. The tackled player has simply tried to make the ball available to his own team. The ball is on the ground. It is being contested by both packs. It is accordingly a ruck. The referee can blow up and award the put-in at the resulting scrum to the team who took the ball into the ruck, the tackled player's team: for it cannot be the other one.

If, however, the ball has failed to touch the deck, the ensuing mêlée counts as a maul, where, if the ball fails to emerge, the referee awards the put-in against the team adjudged to have taken the ball in. What a gamble, what a lottery, what a farce! Is it any wonder that experienced television commentators, sometimes former internationals themselves, are often at a loss to explain why a particular decision has been made, even though they are assisted by television in the commentary box?

A few weeks ago I was watching Bath play Harlequins at the Rec and standing behind Stuart Barnes, who was doing his stuff as a summariser for Sky TV. A player was penalised for lying on the ground and not getting out of the way. Barnes said, entirely justly, that he did not see what else the chap could do in the circumstances. If someone as experienced in the modern game as Barnes can be puzzled, what hope is there for the rest of us?

I could mention other matters: the toleration of the crooked feed; the modern English fashion for awarding ridiculous penalty tries which has now spread to Wales; the new ambivalence about what is and is not a dangerous tackle. But the real trouble remains with "over the top", "not releasing" and the rest of it. For a start I would, first, abolish the distinction between ruck and maul and, second, always award the put-in to the advancing side.

I apologise for the mysterious misspelling of Stradey Park in last week's column. I am now off to pay my annual pilgrimage to the grave of William Webb Ellis in Menton, and shall (DV) be back on Tuesday 21 January. A Happy New Year to all my readers.

East women win seventh title

Hockey

BILL COLWILL

East duly claimed their seventh Women's Under-21 Territorial title at the Milton Keynes National Stadium yesterday but not before they suffered a few shocks from an entertaining West side in their 2-2 draw.

When Kerry Moore scored East's second goal 10 minutes into the second half, after Sarah Marsh had given them a 1-0 interval lead, a win seemed certain. But two goals by West in three minutes midway through the half ensured a tight finish, with a disorganised East desperately hanging on at the end.

For West, Anna Lambert picked up a poor clearance from the East captain, Canterbury's Melanie Clewlow, to run 50 yards through the East defence to score a fine goal, and then Jenna Martin struck a sweetly timed penalty corner to equalise.

Careless defending by East gave West another couple of chances to snatch the game before the final whistle. The draw was enough to give West the overall win in the tournament – now into its 12th year – over South.

The Welsh international Louise Bevan scored in each half as South beat North, 2-0. Both goals came from follow-ups of two of South's 16 penalty-corner attempts. Midlands, last year's champions, came from behind to beat West, 2-1, in the last match of the day, with two goals in the last three minutes. Karen Heckley had put West ahead after 17 minutes after good work down the right by Jenna Martin.

West, playing their second match of the day, tried to defend their narrow lead and all but did it thanks to a string of outstanding saves from their goalkeeper Rachael Cleave before Jennie Bimson and Natalie Hannah converted the late chances, both of which were set up by Lucilla Wright.

In the Under-18 tournament at the Milton Keynes club, East won the title from North, with the Midlands claiming the Under-16 title from East.

Panthers help Devils

Ice hockey

Rejuvenated Nottingham Panthers prevented Newcastle Cobras from closing the gap on the Superleague leaders, Cardiff Devils, with a 9-5 win on Sunday.

Cobras, hidding to make up ground on Devils and second-placed Sheffield Steelers, took the lead in the first minute. But they were out of the game by the 40-minute mark, when they trailed 7-2. Marty Dallman's first hat-trick for Panthers was the main talking point, although the prolific Paul Adey weighed in with a treble himself.

The win made up for Saturday's disappointment as Nottingham were beaten for the first time since winning the Benson and Hedges Cup. Trailing 2-0 at Sheffield, they scored twice in the last three minutes through Adey and Jason Jennings, only to lose to an overtime goal from Nicky Chinn.

The result enabled Sheffield to close the gap on Cardiff to three points.

■ The son of the widely travelled football goalkeeper John Burridge is carving out a sporting career for himself as an ice hockey player with the Blackburn Hawks. Tom Burridge scored two goals in Sunday's Northern Premier League game at Whitley Warriors which earned his mid-table team a 5-4 victory. Burridge was named man of the match.

Steelers make stunning drive

American football

The San Francisco 49ers shut out the Philadelphia Eagles 14-0 and the Pittsburgh Steelers steamrollered the Indianapolis Colts in the second half of what ended up as a 42-14 rout in the NFL play-offs.

The 49ers' Steve Young ran for a touchdown and overcame a rib injury to throw for the other in the NFC wild-card game at 3COM Park on Sunday, while the Steelers' Jerome Bettis ran for 102 yards and two one-yard scores in the AFC wild-card game at Three Rivers Stadium.

The Steelers outplayed the Colts in Pittsburgh but only made sure of facing the New England Patriots in next weekend's divisional play-offs with a 29-point second half. Indianapolis struggled in the first half, too, but the Steelers' starting quarterback Mike Tomczak threw two interceptions, one resulting in a 59-yard touchdown return by Eugene Daniel and the other leading to a TD.

Bettis's first scoring plunge and Kordell Stewart's two-point conversion pass in the third quarter gave Pittsburgh the lead for good, 21-14, after a 16-play, 91-yard march that devoured the first 9:30 of the second half. Bettis carried seven times for 38 yards on the drive. "I don't know if I've seen a drive that took up that much time that was executed that well," the Steelers coach, Bill Cowher, said. Bettis ran in from a yard out again to make it 28-14 just 39 seconds into the fourth quarter.

Young was the 49ers' leading rusher with 67 yards on 12 carries as the 49ers secured a trip to Green Bay for next weekend's divisional play-offs. He scored on a nine-yard quarterback draw early in the second quarter, but suffered bruised ribs and was forced to leave the field briefly after bouncing off two Eagles defenders into the end zone.

Early in the third quarter, Young hurled a 36-yard pass to Jerry Rice, who made the Eagles three-yard line. On the next play, Young and Rice booked up again for a touchdown to make it 14-0.

Pick of the Day

The Rolling Stones' Rock and Roll Circus
10.50pm BBC2

A chance to see just why The Rolling Stones might once just have been "the greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world". Certainly this footage from 1968, since suppressed by Mick Jagger, shows the Stones dating better than any of their guests (Jethro Tull, The Who and – oh lordy – Taj Mahal), while, if you like this sort of thing, we get the sight of Eric Clapton, Keith Richard and Yoko Ono jamming together as "The Dirty Mac".

Film of the Day

Shadowlands
8.00pm BBC1 (not Scotland).

"The butler from *Remains of the Day* promoted to a don" was one wry observation of Sir Anthony Hopkins' performance as C S Lewis in Richard Attenborough's polished screen adaptation of William Nicholson's wonderful play. Sir Anthony, of course, was born to play frigid individuals shyly blossoming – and in this case the donnish Lewis slowly begins to thaw under the attention of American poet Joy Gresham, here played by Debra Winger.

Today's television and radio

BBC 1

7.00 **News; Local News and Weather** *(2408073)*. * 7.10 Joe 90 *(7905580)*. 7.35 The Busy World of Richard Scarry *(R) (S) (1627257)*. **8.00** News; Regional News and Weather *(5066412)*. *

8.10 **Children's BBC: Barney.** 8.15 Peter Pan and the Pirates. * 8.35 The Legend of Prince Valiant. *

9.00 **News; Regional News and Weather** *(3605764)*. *

9.05 **Children's BBC: Incredible Games.** 9.35 Sweet Valley High. 9.55 The Little Polar Bear. 10.00 *Playdays.* 10.20 *William's Wish Wellingtons.*

10.30 **FILM** **Snowball Express** (Norman Tokar 1972 US). New York insurance clerk Dean Jones abandons the rat race after his uncle bequeaths him a rundown hotel in the Colorado Rockies. Dial 'D' for Disney *(23872702)*.

12.05 **The Muppets** *(4992126)*. 12.30 Wipeout *(31851)*. 1.00 News; Weather *(99143528)*. * 1.13 Local News and Weather *(82642122)*. 1.15 Neighbours *(58612948)*. 1.35 The World's Strongest Man 1996 *(5741509)*. *

2.10 **FILM** **Problem Child** (Dennis Dugan 1990 US). Small-town couple John Ritter and Amy Yasbeck are horrified to discover their newly adopted angelic-looking son (Michael Oliver) is actually an uncontrollable delinquent *(7164696)*. *

3.20 **FILM** **Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country** (Nicholas Meyer 1991 US). The sixth and final big-screen sci-fi adventure featuring the crew of the original TV series sees Captain Kirk (William Shatner) put on trial for firing at a Klingon vessel during peace negotiations *(S) (19094696)*. *

5.05 **Neighbours** *(S) (8970528)*. *

5.30 **News and Weather** *(349621)*. *

5.45 **Regional News Magazine** *(382832)*.

6.00 **The World's Strongest Man** *(S) (49870)*. *

7.00 **Only Fools and Horses Selection Box.** The sitcom bows out with Del-Boy, Rodney and Uncle Albert looking back over their 15-year run *(S) (6344)*. *

7.30 **EastEnders.** Nigel makes an important announcement, while Tiffany plays her cards close to her chest. But how close is that? *(S) (238)*. *

8.00 **FILM** **Shadowlands** (Richard Attenborough 1993 UK). *See Film of the Day (S) (83227967)*. *

10.05 **News; Regional News and Weather** *(469702)*. *

10.25 **The Adventures of Morecambe and Wise.** Some of their funniest moments *(R) (350528)*. *

11.00 **The End of the Year Show** Angus Deayton presents an irreverent view of the year's events, with guests Julian Clary, David Baddiel, Lee Hurst and The Spice Girls *(S) (202967)*.

12.05 **Hogmanay Live.** Carol Smillie and Gordon Kennedy join in the festivities at the Great Hall in Edinburgh Castle *(S) (2360246)*.

1.00 **Happy New Year.** The Archbishop of Canterbury sends his greetings *(S) (5043062)*.

1.05 **FILM** **Carry on Girls** (Gerald Thomas 1973 UK). Sid James persuades his local council to hold a beauty contest. Enter outraged feminists with sabotage in mind *(3102807)*. *

2.30 **Weather** (8182831). To 2.35am.

BBC 2

7.30 **The Phil Silvers Show** *(R) (1626528)*. 7.55 James Cagney: Top of the World *(R) (5022899)*.

8.45 **FILM** **Angels with Dirty Faces** (Michael Curtiz 1938 US). Childhood friends James Cagney and Pat O'Brien grow up to become gangster and priest respectively *(47089899)*.

10.20 **Eisenhower, Statesman** *(4375493)*.

11.45 **The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures.** Fossils and evolution, continued *(S) (278528)*. *

12.45 **Clash of the Titans.** The 1988 FA Cup final between Liverpool and Wimbledon *(R) (S) (3821219)*. *

1.25 **The Essential Olympics** *(S) (3048180)*. *

2.40 **More Secret Gardens.** Edge Hill in Gwent, Wales *(R) (3479344)*.

2.50 **Great Railway Journeys.** Clive Anderson travels from Hong Kong to Ulan Bator *(R) (7390702)*. *

3.45 **Love on a Branch Line.** 2/4. Continuing the John Hadfield adaptation, starring Michael Maloney and Leslie Phillips *(R) (S) (6361696)*. *

4.35 **FILM** **An American in Paris** (Vincente Minnelli 1951 US). Minnelli's sparkling, Oscar-laden musical is too overblown for some tastes, but its sheer ambition is belied by a glorious levity and the two grinning leads – Gene Kelly and Leslia Caron. There's a ballet – and there are scenes in the style of Dufy, Renoir, Utrillo, Rousseau, Van Gogh and Toulouse-Lautrec. There are also a top-notch Gershwin score (including "Embraceabla You" and "S'Wonderful"). Book the sofa *(84875948)*. *

6.25 **Shadow the Peregrine.** A year in the life of a female peregrine *(S) (953696)*. *

7.15 **Who Could Ask for Anything More?** A concert celebration of the lyrical genius of Ira Gershwin at the Royal Albert Hall *(S) (19064493)*. *

8.50 **Tap Dogs.** Choreographer Dein Perry and director Nigel Triffit team up with the all-male Australian tap-dance outfit who are revolutionising the genre. The catchphrase is "testosterone tap" *(909667)*. *

9.45 **Siegfried and Roy.** Meet the magician duo, who have been described as the "Liberaces of Magic" and whose shows in Las Vegas are sold out months in advance. The programme explores their stage act and fantastic home life – which they share with a pair of rare white tigers *(S) (808580)*. *

10.25 **Burn Your Phone.** Drama about a stressed-out telephone operator who reaches the end of his tether when plagued by a series of nuisance calls. Alan Cumming stars *(S) (438832)*. *

10.50 **The Rolling Stones' Rock and Roll Circus.** *See Pick of the Day (S) (1456986)*.

12.00 **Jools' Hootenanny.** With Paul Weller, Mick Hucknall and Simply Red, the Lighthouse Family and the Manic Street Preachers *(S) (6387371)*.

1.25 **Elvis: The '68 Comeback Special.** Footage of Elvis's first TV appearance for almost a decade, when, with a truly electrifying performance of nearly 30 of his best known hits, he gave one of the greatest shows of his career *(R) (9207807)*.

2.45 **Weather** (84791). To 2.50am.

ITV/London

6.00 **GMTV** *(7390141)*. 9.25 Santo Bugito *(S) (4235412)*. 9.50 Step by Step *(R) (S) (2293509)*. 10.20 News *(3181122)*. * 10.25 London Today *(3180493)*. *

10.30 **FILM** **Return to Snowy River II** (Geoff Burrowes 1988 Aus). Starring Tom Burlinson, Sigrid Thornton and Brian Dennehy *(S) (60137561)*.

12.20 **Your Shout** *(6571275)*. 12.25 London Today *(7921716)*. * 12.30 ITN Lunchtime News *(9123986)*. * 12.55 London Today *(9108677)*. *

1.25 **FILM** **Beyond the Poseidon Adventure** (Irwin Allen 1979 US). Michael Caine and Telly Savalas star in this sequel to the disaster movie as rival looters on a salvage mission to locate tha capsized passenger liner *(28977493)*. *

3.30 **News** *(1617054)*. 3.35 London Today *(1616325)*. 3.40 Cartoon Time *(6709293)*. 3.55 Body Heat Celebrity Special *(S) (5570035)*. * 4.40 Home and Away Special *(R) (S) (1276141)*.

5.10 **After the News.** News quiz *(S) (7787509)*.

5.40 **News, Weather** *(318257)*. *

5.55 **Your Shout** *(239702)*.

6.00 **London Tonight** (Followed by Weather) *(870)*. *

6.30 **London Bridge** *(S) (122)*.

7.00 **Emmerdale.** Frank Tate is pushed too far *(S) (1412)*. *

7.30 **Taxi.** Second of these tacky programmes in which a camera is concealed in the back of a London cab. Welcome to the future of TV *(306)*. *

8.00 **The Bill.** Drug overdose grief *(7832)*. *

8.30 **Cuts.** Adapted by David Nobbs from Malcolm Bradbury's comic novel, this is satire – of media folk – of the cosiest order, and the sort of obvious casting that makes you wonder why anyone bothers with casting directors. Peter Davison is a mild-mannered lecturer-cum-obscure novelist who's asked to pen an epic drama serial by the power-crazed boss of an independent TV company (Timothy West) *(S) (12870)*. *

10.00 **News, Weather** *(739073)*. *

10.15 **The Bob Downe Special** The Australian comedian plus guests Ant and Dec, Anthony Newley and *EastEnder* Martine McCutcheon *(853734)*. *

11.15 **FILM** **The Golden Child** (Michael Ritchie 1986 US). The sort of tripe that sent Eddie Murphy's career earthwards. He plays a Los Angeles social worker who is reluctantly employed by wizened oriental sages to locate a mystical youth with the power to bring peace to mankind *(S) (550986)*. *

11.55 **New Year Bells.** Trevor McDonald joins Hogmanay revellers at Scotland's Scone Palace *(925986)*.

12.05 **FILM** **The Golden Child** *(S) (9385517)*. *

1.10 **FILM** **Topaz** (Alfred Hitchcock 1969 US). Hitch's 51st feature is a duller-than-dull spy yarn about Cuban rightists, French government agents and so forth. He'd clearly lost his touch at this stage. John Forsythe leads the cast *(33280062)*.

3.30 **FILM** **The Swiss Conspiracy** (Jack Arnold 1975 US). Derivative thriller starring David Janssen as a bank security expert *(27333)*. To 5.00am.

Channel 4

6.20 **Early Morning: Sesame Street** *(3557764)*.

7.15 **The Babysitters Club** *(R) (9888324)*.

7.50 **Stunt Dawgs** *(5302290)*.

8.15 **Little Shop** *(R) (7422783)*.

8.35 **Where on Earth Is Carmen San Diego?** *(R) (6445696)*.

9.00 **The Big Breakfast** *(37832)*.

10.00 **Hangin' with Mr Cooper** *(R) (S) (21696)*. *

10.30 **The Crystal Maze** *(R) (S) (43412)*. *

11.30 **Back to the Future** *(R) (S) (9058257)*.

11.55 **The Pink Panther** *(R) (2164782)*.

12.20 **Soul Searching.** New series of debates investigating moral issues from a Jewish, Muslim and Hindu perspective *(S) (3447031)*. *

12.50 **Babylon 5** *(R) (S) (3734306)*. *

1.40 **As It Happens.** Drs Phil Hammond and Tony Gardner begin a day of on-the-spot reports from Birmingham City Hospital *(7229870)*.

2.20 **FILM** **Les Girls** (George Cukor 1957 US). Tragic Kay Kendall is the best thing about this good-looking but sorry musical – and we don't get enough of her. Everybody else seems to be having an off time of it, from Gene Kelly and Mitzi Gaynor in the leading roles to Cole Porter's weak score. The story concerns an ex-showgirl who publishes her steamy memoirs and finds herself issued with a lawsuit by two former colleagues *(88122257)*. *

4.30 **Countdown** *(S) (219)*. *

5.00 **Technological Threat** *(5646412)*.

5.10 **FILM** **Tom Thumb** (George Pal 1958 US). The first of four films featuring Peter Sellers tonight is MGM's fine musical version of the story, with Russ Tamblyn in the title role *(55312412)*. *

6.50 **News Summary and Weather** *(351783)*.

6.55 **FILM** **Two Way Stretch** (Robert Day 1960 UK). Lovely old British comedy in which convicts Peter Sellers, Bernard Cribbins and David Lodge break out of jail to rob a maharajah then sneak back in to give themselves the perfect alibi *(54716122)*. *

8.30 **Brookside.** Jackie realises that forgetting Jimmy is easier said than done *(S) (4509)*. *

9.00 **As It Happens.** Another report from Birmingham City Hospital *(681677)*.

9.15 **FILM** **A Shot in the Dark** (Blake Edwards 1964 UK). Sequel to *The Pink Panther* – Peter Sellers returns as the bumbling Inspector Clouseau, out to prove a French maid (Elke Sommer) innocent of her husband's murder *(84763764)*. *

11.10 **The Adam and Joe Show** *(611561)*.

11.45 **As It Happens.** Back to Birmingham City Hospital, where no doubt things are hotting up *(912702)*.

12.40 **St Elsewhere.** Vintage episode of the American medical drama *(R) (S) (9148975)*.

1.40 **As It Happens** *(4532913)*.

2.45 **FILM** **Optimists of Nine Elms** (Anthony Simmons 1973 US). Rarely seen Peter Sellers outing in which he plays a down-and-out busker adopted by a group of London slum children. This was originally a vehicle for Danny Kaye, which gives you an idea about the tone *(526517)*. *To 4.45am.*

ITV/Regions

ANGLIA
As London except: 12.55pm Cross Wits *(9108677)*. 4.40 Shortland Street *(1276141)*. 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 6.00 Home and Away Special *(581677)*. 1.10am Film: Independence *(503994)*. 3.00am Football Extra *(9208888)*. 3.40am Instant Replay 1996 *(6490623)*. 4.35-5.55am Film: The Pickwick Papers *(4534352)*.

CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/YORKSHIRE
As London except: 12.55pm Coronation Street *(9108677)*. 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 1.10am Instant Replay 1996 *(4389772)*. 2.10am Not Fade Away *(5525994)*. 3.05am Film: Sextette *(7572468)*. 4.35-5.55am Film: The Pickwick Papers *(4534352)*.

CENTRAL
As London except: 12.55pm A Country Practice *(9108677)*. 4.40 Pongo's Tail: The Making of 101 Dalmatians *(1276141)*. 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 6.00-6.30pm Home and Away Special *(581677)*.

HTV
As London except: 12.55pm *West:* Dinosaurs *(9108677)*. *Wales:* Petersen (9108677). 3.35 HTV News *(1616325)*. 4.40 Pongo's Tail: The Making of 101 Dalmatians (1276141). 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 6.00 Home and Away Special *(581677)*. 1.10am Film: Independence *(503994)*. 3.00am Football Extra *(9208888)*. 3.40am Instant Replay 1996 *(6490623)*. 4.35-5.55am Film: The Pickwick Papers *(4534352)*.

MERIDIAN
As London except: 12.55pm Shortland Street *(9108677)*. 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 6.30 Celebrity Squares *(122)*. 1.10am Film: Independence *(503994)*. 3.00am Football Extra *(9208888)*. 3.40am Instant Replay 1996 *(6490623)*. 4.35-5.55am Film: The Pickwick Papers *(4534352)*.

WESTCOUNTRY
As London except: 12.20pm My Story/Illuminations *(2876667)*. 12.55 Wish You Were Here? *(9108677)*. 5.10 Wheel of Fortune *(7787509)*. 1.10am Film: Independence *(503994)*. 3.00am Football Extra *(9208888)*. 3.40am Instant Replay 1996 *(6490623)*. 4.35-5.55am Film: The Pickwick Papers *(4534352)*.

S4C
10.00am Film: Dr Dolittle *(70823306)*. 12.35 The Pink Panther *(9120899)*. 1.00 Slot Meithrin *(61702)*. 1.30 Film: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer *(2633667)*. 2.50 Film: Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure *(46754344)*. 4.30 5 Pump *(61561)*. 5.30 Countdown *(899)*. 6.00 News *(480509)*. 6.05 Heno *(592783)*. 6.35 Sion a Sian *(741122)*. 7.00 Pobol y Cwm *(892615)*. 7.25 Teyrnged I Barc Yr Arfau *(3370967)*. 8.30 Film: Y Fargen *(64019696)*. 10.10 Brookside *(348783)*. 10.45 Wil Sam Gan WS Jones *(634035)*. 11.15 Noson Lawen: Nos Galan *(758180)*. 12.15am The Adam and Joe Show *(90352)*. 12.45-2.25am Film: Divine Madness *(863352)*.

Radio

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
8.00am Kevin Greening 12.00 Robbie Williams 2.00 The Best of Collins and Maconie's Hit Parade 1996 3.00 UK Top 40 of 1996 7.00 Pete Tong's All Time National Anthems 10.30 Radio 1 Roadshow 12.30-6.00am Essential Mix Live in Liverpool

Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00am Nick Barraclough 7.30 Sarah Kennedy 9.30 Alex Lester 11.30 *Jimmy Young* 1.00 *Christmas* Comedy Classics 1.30 The Beatles at the BBC 2.30 *Ed Stewart* 5.05 John Dunn 7.00 Hayes *over Britain Review* of the Year 8.30 Dr Who 9.00 Dave Allen: God's Comic 10.00 Champagne and Roisterers 10.30 Vintage Christmas: The Canterville Ghost 11.00 A Christmas to Remember 12.50 Adrian Finighan 3.00-6.00am Steve Madden

Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00am On Air.
9.00 Morning Collection.
10.00 Musical Encounters.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Bernstein.
1.00 News; The BBC Orchestras. Ravel: Suite: Mother Goose. Ibert: Concertino da Camera. Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique.
2.30 Ensemble.
3.15 The BBC Orchestras.
5.00 Music Machine.
5.15 Interpretations on Record. Adrian Jack considers the recorded legacy of the Piano Quintet by Schumann.
6.30 Les Fêtes d'Hebe. Fantastical opera by Rameau in which Hebe, cup-bearer of the Gods, persuades *her Olympian attendants to fly to* the banks of the Seine with her and celebrate the most valued attributes of the stage – poetry, music and dance. Recorded at the Barbican Centre, London.
10.00 The Shellac Show. Jeremy Nicholas introduces music from the age of 78 rpm records, including works by Mozart, Moszkowski and Scarlatti.
10.45 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky.
11.45 Jazz Notes. Live from Ronnie Scott's, Birmingham. Digby Fairweather introduces a New Year's jazz party with King Pleasure and the Biscuit Boys.
1.00 Through the Night.
5.00-6.00am Sequence.

Choice

BBC correspondents predict who's going to be hot and who's not in 1997 in **Correspondents Look Ahead** (8.30pm R4). Looking backwards, **Consequences** (7.20pm R4) examines the effects of the Beeching Report on Britain's railways – did it save the railways or was it a national disaster?

Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM; 198kHz LW)
6.00am News.
6.10 Farming Today.
6.25 Prayer for the Day.
6.30 Today.
8.43 Below the Parapet.
9.00 News.
9.05 I Was That Teenager.
9.45 Letter from Over Here.
10.00 (LW) Daily Service.
10.00 (FM) Something to Write Home About.
10.15 (LW) On This Day.
10.30 Derek Cooper's Necessary Pleasures.
11.00 An Everyday Story of Eurofolk.
11.30 The Old Curiosity Shop. By Charles Dickens. Nell and her grandfather are forced to leave their jobs with Mrs Jarley. (5/6).
12.00 Paid Company.
12.25 Random Edition.
1.00 The World at One.
1.40 The Archers.
1.55 Shipping Forecast.
2.00 Box of Delights. By John Masefield. With Spike Milligan. (2/2).
3.30 Locate and Cement. Nick Baker explores the world of the instruction manual and asks why are they often impossible to follow.
4.00 News.
4.05 They Shoot Trainers – Don't They? Pam Cockerill follows the progress of Yorkshire racehorse trainer Charles Booth as he tries to transform a new horse into the next Grand National winner.
4.45 Short Story: *The Last Commandment*. By Jean Clayworth.
5.00 PM.
5.55 Shipping Forecast.
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.15 Going South.
6.30 A Little of What You Fancy. By H E Bates. (6/6).
7.00 News.
7.05 The Archers.
7.20 Consequences. (1/4).
8.00 Ad Lib.
8.30 Correspondents Look Ahead.
9.30 Kaleidoscope Feature. Paul Doust chronicles the decline of seaside piers.
10.00 The World Tonight.
10.45 Book at Bedtime: *Scarlet and Black*. By Stendhal. (2/10).
11.00 Christmas with *Mr* Punch.
11.30 Cook's Tour. (3/3).
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Book: *Through the Looking Glass*. (2/7).
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00-6.00am As World Service.

Radio 5
(693, 909kHz MW)
6.00am Breakfast 8.35 Magazine 12.00 Midday with Mair 2.05 Ruscoe on Five 4.00 Nationwide 7.00 News Extra 7.35 Vital Statistics 8.05 Any Sporting Questions? 10.05 The Matador from Manchester 10.35 Frostbite and Footholds 11.00 Night Extra 11.35 Never Walk Alone 12.05 After Hours 2.05 Up All Night 5.05 Vital Statistics 5.35-6.00am Lawrence Batley

Classic FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00am Mike Read 9.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Margaret Howard 2.00 Concerto 3.00 Jamie Crick 6.00-Newsnight Review 6.30 Sonata 7.00 Ken Russell's Movie Classics 8.00 Viennese Concert 11.00 Hogmanay Party 1.00 Alan Freeman 4.00-6.00am Mark Griffiths.

Virgin Radio
(1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.00am Jeremy Clark 10.00 Graham Dene 1.00 Mitch Johnson 4.00 Nicky Horne 7.00 (FM) Paul Coyte 7.00 (MW) Richard Porter 10.00 Rock Till You Drop 2.00-6.00am Randall Lee Rose

World Service
(198kHz LW)
1.00am Newsdesk 1.30 Outlook 1.55 Words of Faith 2.00 Newsday 2.30 Composer of the Month 3.00 News 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Meridian 4.00 Newsdesk 4.30 Off the Shelf: *Gode's Story* 4.45 Farming World 5.00 Newsday 5.30-6.00am Omnibus

Satellite

Movie Channel
6.00am The Gypsy Colt (1954) *(53325)*. 7.30 Master of the World (1976) *(56412)*. 8.30 Gulliver's Travels (1983) *(69054)*. 10.00 Bigfoot: The Unforgettable Encounter (1994) *(88783)*. 12.00 A Time to Love and a Time to Die (1957) *(24022073)*. 2.15 Brothers of the Frontier (1995) *(154290)*. 4.00 Young Indiana Jones and the Hollywood Follies (1995) *(9344)*. 6.00 Rolling Thunder (1995) *(98967)*. 7.30 Special Feature: The Year In Review *(3035)*. 8.00 Rob Roy (1995) *(94198238)*. 10.20 Drop Zone (1994) *(699325)*. 12.05 The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994) *(241081)*. 1.50 Night Eyes II (1991) *(574642)*. 3.30-5.05am Only the Strong (1993) *(53449)*.

Sky Movies
6.00am She Led Two Lives (1995) *(46764)*. 8.00 A Perfect Couple (1979) *(66783)*. 10.00 Cult Rescue (1994) *(80141)*. 12.00 Spoils of War (1993) *(56306)*. 2.00 Weekend at Bernie's II (1993) *(27696)*. 4.00 Rudy (1993) *(1702)*. 6.00 Baby's Day Out (1994) *(84012)*. 8.00 Hercules in the Underworld (1994) *(19677)*. 10.00 Guarding Tess (1995) *(682035)*. 11.40 Bad Girls (1994) *(727967)*. 1.20 When the Bough Breaks (1993) *(662246)*. 3.00-4.50am The Wrong Man (1993) *(49772)*.

Sky Movies Gold
4.00pm The Champ (1979) *(51654696)*. 6.05 The Party (1968) *(25843899)*. 8.00 Memphis Belle (1990) *(3590412)*. 10.00 Stripes (1981) *(89087832)*. 12.05 Film: Nuns on the Run (1990) *(7897333)*. 1.40 The River (1984) *(26130420)*. 3.45-5.45am Sinbad the Sailor (1947) *(5945739)*.

Sky Sports 1
7.00am Sports Centre *(35325)*. 7.30 Tartan Extra *(76290)*. 8.30 Racing *(52528)*. 9.00 Sports Centre *(36580)*. 9.30 Aerobics *(80899)*. 10.00 Football: Spanish League *(60035)*. 12.00 Aerobics *(56344)*. 12.30 Basketball *(56948)*. 2.30 American Football *(80306)*. 4.30 Rebel Sports *(5412)*. 5.00 WWF *(9986)*. 6.00 Sports Centre *(69306)*. 7.00 Darts *(281306)*. 10.00 Sports Centre *(67238)*. 11.00 Football Special: Ferguson *(44073)*. 12.00 Best Goals and Football Bloopers of 1996 *(20710)*. 1.30 Sports Unlimited *(56807)*. 2.30-3.30am Sports Centre New Year's Eve Special *(19449)*.

Sky Sports 3
12.00noon Darts *(99249412)*. 4.00 Tartan Extra *(10425870)*. 5.00 Football: Ferguson – Ten Years at United *(41651219)*. 6.00 World of Speed and Beauty *(83345561)*. 6.30 Drag Racing *(83369141)*. 7.00 Sports Centre Special *(41586764)*. 8.00 Basketball *(41506528)*. 10.00-11.30pm NFL American Football (12362219).

Sky 1
7.00am Love Connection *(4876851)*. 7.20 Press Your Luck *(4896615)*. 7.40 Designing Women *(3013035)*. 8.10 Hotel *(5468832)*. 9.00 Another World *(5903685)*. 9.45 Oprah *(7718257)*. 10.40 Real TV *(4631870)*. 11.10 Sally Jessy Raphael *(9263870)*. 12.00 Geraldo *(65832)*. 1.00 The Canterville Ghost *(62967)*. 3.00 Jenny Jones *(46324)*. 4.00 Oprah *(86851)*. 5.00 Star Trek *(6870)*. 6.00 The Simpsons *(2031)*. 6.30 The Simpsons *(4141)*. 7.00 The Simpsons *(4899)*. 7.30 M*A*S*H *(2275)*. 8.00 Springhill *(8649)*. 8.30 Southenders *(2054)*. 9.00 The Bible: Moses – Part Two *(16580)*. 11.00 Star Trek *(70847)*. 12.00 LAPD *(24791)*. 12.30 Real TV *(15492)*. 1.00-7.00am Hit Mix Long Play *(74468)*.

Sky 2
7.00pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine *(1859870)*. 8.00 Blockbuster Entertainment Awards 1996 (1846306). 10.00 New York Undercover *(1858141)*. 11.00 Late Show with David Letterman *(1273764)*. 12.00 Film: A History of the World Part 1 (1981) *(6150420)*. 2.00-6.00am Hit Mix Long Play *(4884284)*.

Live TV
6.00am Information TV 7.00 Spanish Archer New Year's Special 8.00 Why Files 8.30 Video Box 9.00 Psychic Pets 9.30 Fashion 10.30 Canary Wharf 11.00 Mind and Body 11.30 Spanish Archer 12.30 Why Files 1.00 Looking for Love 1.30 Psychic Pets 2.00 Fashion 2.30 Mind and Body 3.00 Video Box 3.30 Pin Money 4.00 Spanish Archer 4.30 Why Files 5.00 Canary Wharf 5.30 Looking for Love 6.00 Fashion 6.30 Sport Live 7.00 Spanish Archer 8.00 Psychic Pets 8.30 Abba Special 9.03 Revelations Special10.03 Spanish Archer 11.03 Hogmany Live from Edinburgh 12.30-6.00am Night-Time Programmes

Going Out

CINEMA NEW RELEASES

101 DALMATIANS (U) Starring Glenn Close as Cruella De Vil. *Acton Warner Village* 10.30am, 11am, 1pm, 1.50pm, 3.30pm, 4.20pm, 6pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm, 9.50pm *Barbican Cinema* 3pm, 6pm, 8.30pm *Barking Odeon* 12.35pm, 1.35pm, 3.05pm, 3.55pm *Barnet Odeon* 1.25pm, 3.55pm *Beckenham ABC* 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.20pm *Bromley Odeon* 1pm, 3.35pm *Catford ABC* 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 5.50pm *Clapham Picture House* 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm *Croydon Safari* 1.10pm, 3.40pm *Croydon Warner Village* 10.25am, 10.45am, 12.45pm, 1.15pm, 3.15pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 6.15pm *Ealing Virgin Uxbridge Road* 11.50am, 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm *Edgware Belle-vue* 12.20pm, 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm *Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12* 10.25am, 10.55am, 11.20am, 1pm, 1.30pm, 1.55pm, 3.40pm, 4.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.20pm, 7pm, 7.20pm *Enfield ABC* 1.20pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm *Ewell ABC* 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm *Finchley Warner* 10.45am, 11.15am, 1.10pm, 1.45pm, 3.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 6.45pm *Golders Green Cannon Ionic* 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm *Greenwich Cinema* 1.30pm, 3.55pm *Hampstead MGM* 1.45pm, 3.25pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm *Hammersmith Virgin* Phone for details *Harrow Warner* 11.20am, 12.25pm, 1.20pm, 2.45pm, 3.40pm, 5.05pm, 6pm *Hendon ABC* 2.05pm, 4.20pm, 6.25pm *Holloway Odeon* 1pm, 1.35pm, 3.15pm, 3.50pm *Ilford Odeon* 1.30pm, 3.50pm *Kingston Options* 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm *Muswell Hill Odeon* 1.30pm, 3.55pm *Odeon Kensington* 11.45am, 2.10pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm *Odeon Leicester Square* 12.45pm, 3.25pm *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm *Peckham Premier Cinema* Phone for details *Purley ABC* 12.40pm, 3.10pm, 5.40pm *Putney ABC* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm *Richmond Odeon* 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.30pm *Richmond Odeon Studio* 1pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm *Ritzy Cinema* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6pm, 8.15pm *Romford ABC* 12.15pm, 2.35pm, 4.55pm *Romford Odeon Liberty 2* 11.30am, 12.45pm, 1.45pm, 3.15pm, 4.15pm *Screen on Baker Street* 2.20pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm *Sidcup ABC* 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 5.50pm *Staples Corner Virgin* 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4.20pm, 5.20pm, 6.50pm, 8pm *Streatham Odeon* 12.05pm, 2.15pm, 4.25pm *Sutton UCI 6* 10.30am, 11.15am, 1pm, 1.45pm, 3.15pm, 4pm, 6pm, 6.20pm *Turnpike Lane Coronet* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm *UCI Whiteleys* 10.55am, 11.50am, 1.25pm, 2.10pm, 3.55pm, 4.35pm, 6.15pm, 7pm *Uxbridge Odeon* 11.20am, 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.25pm *Virgin Chelsea* 12.30pm, 2.35pm, 4.55pm, 7.15pm *Virgin Fulham Road* 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm *Walthamstow ABC* 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 4.45pm *Walton on Thames Screen* 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm *Well Hall Coronet* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm *Wimbledon Odeon* 11am, 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm *Woodford ABC* 1.40pm, 4pm *Woolwich Coronet* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm

DAYLIGHT (12) Sylvester Stallone in a watery action-adventure. *ABC Baker Street* 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm *ABC Tottenham Court Road* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.40pm *Barking Odeon* 1.05pm, 3.40pm *Barnet Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.05pm *Beckenham ABC* 1.50pm, 5.30pm *Croydon Safari* 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6pm *Croydon Warner Village* 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm *Ealing Virgin Uxbridge Road* 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm *Edgware Belle-vue* 12.10pm, 2.15pm, 5.15pm *Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12* 10.45am, 11.10am, 1.20pm, 2pm, 4.05pm, 4.35pm, 6.50pm, 7.15pm, 9.35pm *Elephant & Castle Coronet* 1.35pm, 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.50pm *Empire Leicester Square* 11.30am, 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.30pm *Finchley Warner* 10.35am, 1.20pm, 4.05pm, 6.50pm, 9.30pm *Hampstead MGM* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm *Hammersmith Virgin* Phone for details *Harrow Warner* 3.15pm, 6.25pm *Hendon ABC* 2.30pm, 5.30pm *Holloway Odeon* 12.55pm, 3.30pm *Ilford Odeon* 12.40pm, 3.30pm *Kingston Options* 2.15pm, 5.35pm *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1.10pm, 3.40pm *Peckham Premier Cinema* Phone for details *Purley ABC* 2.10pm, 5.10pm *Putney ABC* 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm *Richmond Odeon* 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm *Romford ABC* 11.55am, 2.20pm, 4.45pm *Romford Odeon Liberty 2* 12.50pm *Staples Corner Virgin* 12noon, 2.30pm, 5.20pm *Streatham ABC* 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm *Sutton UCI 6* 12.15pm, 3pm, 6pm *UCI Whiteleys* 11.10am, 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.45pm *Virgin Chelsea* 1.15pm, 3.55pm, 6.45pm *Virgin Trocadero* 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6.15pm *Walthamstow ABC* 12.05pm, 2.25pm, 4.45pm *Wimbledon Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm *Woodford ABC* 2.10pm, 5.10pm

EVITA (PG) Madonna stars as peasant girl Eva Duarte. *Odeon West End* 12.15pm, 1.45pm, 3.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.15pm

JINGLE ALL THE WAY (PG) Arnold Schwarzenegger stars. *Acton Warner Village* 11.10am, 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm *Barking Odeon* 1.10pm, 2.55pm, 4.55pm *Barnet Odeon* 1.45pm, 4pm *Beckenham ABC* 1.45pm, 6.35pm *Bromley Odeon* 12.30pm, 2.35pm, 4.35pm, 6.40pm *Croydon Warner Village* 12.30pm, 2.45pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm *Ealing Virgin Uxbridge Road* 12.30pm, 5pm *Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12* 10.35am, 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm *Enfield ABC* 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.10pm *Finchley Warner* 10.40am, 12.55pm, 3.10pm, 5.25pm *Greenwich Cinema* Phone for details *Hammersmith Virgin* Phone for details *Harrow Warner* 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm *Hendon ABC* 2.10pm, 6.35pm *Holloway Odeon* 1.15pm, 3.05pm *Ilford Odeon* 1pm, 3.40pm *Kingston Options* 1.25pm, 6.10pm *Muswell Hill Odeon* 2pm, 4.05pm *Odeon Kensington* 12.10pm, 2.25pm, 4.40pm, 7.25pm *Odeon Mezzanine, Leicester Square* 2.10pm, 4.10pm *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1.30pm, 4pm *Peckham Premier Cinema* Phone for details *Plaza* 2.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm *Purley ABC* 1.10pm, 6pm *Putney ABC* 1.45pm, 6.15pm *Richmond Odeon Studio* 4.10pm, 7pm *Romford ABC* 12.25pm, 5.10pm *Romford Odeon Liberty 2* 11.15am, 1.20pm, 3.30pm *Staples Corner Virgin* 11.55am, 2.05pm, 4.10pm *Streatham Odeon* 12.40pm, 2.50pm *Turnpike Lane Coronet* 4pm, 6.30pm *UCI Whiteleys* 11.30am, 1.55pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm *Virgin Chelsea* 1pm, 3.10pm, 5.15pm, 7.20pm *Virgin Trocadero* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm *Walthamstow ABC* 12.05pm, 4.25pm *Warner West End* 1pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm *Wimbledon Odeon* 11.55am, 1.55pm, 3.55pm *Woodford ABC* 1.20pm, 6.25pm *Woolwich Coronet* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm

ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA (PG) Twisted fairytale. *Acton Warner Village* 10.50am, 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm *Barking Odeon* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm *Barnet Odeon* 1.55pm, 4.15pm *Bromley Odeon* 2.05pm, 4.25pm *Clapham Picture House* 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm *Croydon Warner Village* 11.50am, 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm *Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12* 10.15am, 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm *Finchley Warner* 11am, 1.35pm, 4pm, 6.25pm *Greenwich Cinema* 2.35pm 4.45pm *Hammersmith Virgin* Phone for details *Harrow Warner* 11.30am, 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.15pm *Holloway Odeon* 1.30pm, 3.45pm *Ilford Odeon* 12.20pm, 3.10pm *Muswell Hill Odeon* 1.10pm, 3.30pm *Odeon Kensington* 2.05pm, 4.35pm, 7.05pm, 9.35pm *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1.25pm, 4pm *Peckham Premier Cinema* Phone for details *Richmond Odeon* 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm *Ritzy Cinema* 11.50am, 1.55pm, 4pm, 6.05pm *Romford Odeon Liberty 2* 11.15am, 1.30pm, 3.50pm *Staples Corner Virgin* 12noon, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 6.55pm *Streatham Odeon* 12.25pm, 2.35pm, 4.45pm *Sutton UCI 6* 10.45am, 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 6.15pm *Turnpike Lane Coronet* 1.40pm, 3.55pm, 6.25pm *UCI Whiteleys* 11.20am, 1.45pm, 4.05pm, 6.40pm *Uxbridge Odeon* 11.40am, 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.40pm *Virgin Chelsea* 12.30pm, 2.40pm, 4.50pm, 7.05pm *Virgin Trocadero* 12.05pm, 2.15pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm *Walton on Thames Screen* 1.50pm, 4.10pm, 6.35pm *Warner West End* 12.20pm, 2.40pm, 4.50pm, 7pm *Well Hall Coronet* 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.25pm *Wimbledon Odeon* 11.30am, 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm

STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT (12) The crew of the Starship Enterprise lock phasers with the merciless Borg. Patrick Stewart stars. *ABC Baker Street* 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm *ABC Tottenham Court Road* 1.35pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm *Acton Warner Village* 11.30am, 12.40pm, 2pm, 3.20pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 8.10pm, 8.40pm 9.30pm *Barking Odeon* 1pm, 3.35pm *Barnet Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm *Beckenham ABC* 4pm *Bromley Odeon* 12.45pm, 3.25pm *Catford ABC* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm *Clapham Picture House* 4.45pm *Croydon Safari* 6.10pm *Croydon Warner Village* 12.35pm, 3.30pm, 5.55pm *Ealing Virgin Uxbridge Road* 2.30pm, 7pm *Edgware Belle-vue* 12.05pm, 2.40pm, 5.20pm *Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12* 11.05am, 1.40pm, 4.25pm, 6.45pm, 7.05pm *Enfield ABC* 1pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm *Ewell ABC* 1.05pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm *Finchley Warner* 10.55am, 1.30pm, 4.20pm, 7pm *Greenwich Cinema* 4.15pm, 6.35pm *Hammersmith Virgin* Phone for details *Harrow Warner* 11.20am, 1.30pm, 2pm, 4.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm *Hendon ABC* 4.05pm *Holloway Odeon* 1.10pm, 3.40pm *Ilford Odeon* 12.30pm, 3pm *Kingston Options* 3.35pm *Notting Hill Coronet* 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm *Odeon Kensington* 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.50pm *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1.15pm, 3.45pm *Peckham Premier Cinema* Phone for details *Plaza* 1.35pm, 4.05pm, 6.35pm *Purley ABC* 3.25pm *Putney ABC* 3.45pm *Richmond Odeon Studio* 6.30pm, 9.10pm *Ritzy Cinema* 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm *Romford ABC* 2.45pm *Romford Odeon Liberty 2* 1pm, 3.35pm *Screen on the Green* 3.30pm, 6.20pm *Sidcup ABC* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm *Streatham ABC* 12.55pm, 3.25pm *Sutton UCI 6* 12.30pm, 2.45pm, 6.10pm *UCI Whiteleys* 11.05am, 2pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm *Virgin Fulham Road* 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.45pm *Virgin Trocadero* 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.30pm *Walthamstow ABC* 2.05pm *Wimbledon Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm *Woodford ABC* 3.40pm

SURVIVING PICASSO (15) Merchant-Ivory biopic of the great artist: the man, his work and his tempestuous long-term relationship with Françoise Gilot, stars Anthony Hopkins. *Swiss Cottage Odeon* 1pm, 3.30pm *Renoir* 12.50pm, 3.25pm, 6pm, 8.35pm *Ritzy Cinema* 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm *Screen on Baker Street* 3pm, 5.55pm *UCI Whiteleys* 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.25pm, 9.10pm (Mon) *Virgin Fulham Road* 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm *Virgin Haymarket* 2.15pm, 5.10pm, 8.05pm *Warner West End* 12.40pm, 3.15pm, 5.50pm

THROUGH THE OLIVE TREES (U) Third part of Abbas Kiarostami's acclaimed trilogy, following a film crew's exploits in an earthquake-ravaged north Iranian village. *Renoir* 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

THEATRE WEST END HIGHLIGHTS

ART
Stars Albert Finney.
Wyndham's Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1736) ⊖ Leic Sq. Tue-Sat 8.00, [4] 3.00 [7][1] 5.00 (Tonight 5.00 only), £9.50-£25. 90 mins.

BY JEEVES
Lloyd Webber/Ayckbourn musical.
Lyric Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5045) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45, [4][7] 3.00, £11.50-£25. 140 mins.

CASH ON DELIVERY
Michael Cooney's farce.
Whitehall Whitehall, SW1 (0171-369 1735) BR/⊖ Char X. Mon-Fri 8.00, Sat 8.30, [4] 3.00 [7] 5.30 (Tonight 6pm), £10-£22. 135 mins.

LE CERCLE INVISIBLE
Evocative distillation of the circus form.
Mermaid Puddle Dock, EC4 (0171-236 2211) BR/⊖ Blackfriars. Tue-Sat 7.30 (not Tonight), [1] 4.00 (extra mats today & 1 Jan, 4.00), ends 12 Jan, £13.50-£19.50, concs & standby £10, child £10, family of four £50. 120 mins.

THE CHERRY ORCHARD
Penelope Wilton in Chekhov's classic.
Albery St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1730) ⊖ Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 7.30, [5][7] 3.00, ends 25 Jan, £10-£25. 165 mins.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR
Rice/Lloyd Webber's biblical musical.
Lyceum Wellington Street, WC2 (0171-656 1802) ⊖ Charing X. Mon-Sat 7.45, [4][7] 3.00, £15-£32.50. 165 mins.

LAUGHTER ON THE 23RD FLOOR
Gene Wilder in Neil Simon's comedy.
Queen's Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5590) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 8.00, [4] 2.30 [7] 4.00, £9.50-£25. 140 mins.

MARTIN GUERRE
Boublil and Schonberg's musical.
Prince Edward Old Compton Street, W1 (0171-447 5400) ⊖ Leicester Square. Mon-Sat 7.45, [5][7] 3.00, £16.50-£32.50. 150 mins.

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE:
Olivier:
Guys And Dolls Richard Eyre's production of Frank Loesser's Broadway-set musical stars Clarke Peters and Joanna Riding. Mon-Sat 7.15, mats Sat 2.00 (extra mat Tonight 2.00pm), ends 19 Mar. 165 mins.
Lyttelton:
Death Of A Salesman Alun Armstrong stars in Arthur Miller's searing study of family conflict. Today, 2.15 & 7.30, continuing in rep. 175 mins.
Cottesloe:
Fair Ladies At A Game Of Poem Cards Tale of forbidden courtly love. Tonight, 7.30, in rep until 29 Jan. 165 mins. Olivier: £12-£32.50. Lyttelton: £8-£24. Cottesloe: £12-£16. South bank, London SE1 9PX. 0171-928 2252.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY:
The Barbican:
Macbeth Tim Albery's production. Tonight, 7.15, in rep until 27 Mar. 195 mins.
The Pit:
The Herbal Bed Peter Whelan's emotional thriller. Tonight, 7.15, in rep until 16 Jan. 160 mins. Barbican Theatre: £6-£24.50. The Pit: £10-£17. Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS. 0171 638 8891.

NINE
Fellini-inspired musical.
Donmar Warehouse Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732) ⊖ Leicester Square. Mon-Sat 7.30, [4][7] 3pm, ends 8 Mar, £12-£25. 120 mins.

OLD WICKED SONGS
Jon Marans' drama, starring Bob Hoskins.
Gielgud Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5065) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.30, [5] 2.30 [7] 4.00, £9-£24. 120 mins.

SCROOGE
Dominion Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-416 6060) ⊖ Tott Ct Rd. Mon-Sat 7.30 (not Tonight 1 Jan), [5][7] 3.00 (extra mats Tonight 31 Jan, 3.00), ends 1 Feb, £5.50-£27.50. 150 mins.

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
Tennessee Williams' tense drama stars Jessica Lange and Toby Stephens.
Theatre Royal Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800) ⊖ Picc Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45, [5][7] 3.00, £10-£30. 195 mins.

At the double
Greg Wood sees the darts revival gather pace, page 21

sport

Rugby's powder keg
Chris Hewett on union's survival test, page 22

Campbell attacks English attitudes

David Lloyd (left), the England coach, talks to his assistant, John Emburey, prior to the umpires' decision to abandon play in Harare yesterday Photograph: Clive Mason/Allsport

Cricket
DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Harare

The weather may have settled it but it was the Zimbabwe captain, Alistair Campbell, who defiantly had the last say as this series finally spluttered to a draw after the last day's play was abandoned at lunch without a ball being bowled. Responding to claims by his opposite number, that England would have run out winners had both games been uninterrupted by rain, Campbell felt his opponents were "clutching at thin air".

"It's been one of the easier series for us," he said afterwards. "I really don't think there's that much between ourselves, New Zealand and England." A point he emphasised when he named the England players – Stewart (to bat only), Knight, Gough, Croft and Crawley – he felt might on current form get a game for Zimbabwe. A side, who as their captain pointed out, are probably only currently bottom-rated because of their constant visits to the subcontinent, a place where few travel well.

For England, it was damnation with the faintest hint of praise and Campbell was clearly miffed when he delivered his verdict. What has clearly irked the home side most however – judging by the amount of times Campbell repeated the phrase – were the claims made by David "We flippin' murdered 'em" Lloyd, in the aftermath of the drawn Bulawayo Test.

"To keep saying they outplayed us is an astounding claim," Campbell ranted. "Why can't they shrug off their superiority complex and just accept that we've matched them. It's monotonous to hear them keep saying that they've murdered us and a little bit of credit wouldn't go astray." He has a point and England have been notoriously glum in applauding opponents over recent series.

However, as is nearly always the case, the truth is out there lying somewhere between the polar opposites of propaganda now churned out as a matter of course by most cricket teams.

That said, it has been England who have had the better chances of winning this series, though it was more by opportunism than consistently superior cricket, the likes of which Australia would have played had they been here instead of reviving old enemies in Melbourne.

Unlike the Australians, whose superiority complex is deep-seated and utterly unquestioned, ours comes in spurts, usually at home where familiarity seems to breed contentment rather than the apathy that appears to set in abroad – an affliction that weakens resolve and one that is often caused by the numbing routine endemic to most long tours.

Interestingly, one player described his experience of the current tour, as being like that of the television reporter in *Groundhog Day*. This is a film where one man's dull day in a hick American town, is replayed over and over, until he is able to avoid all the pitfalls that befell him on that original first day.

Unfortunately, that has not quite been the experience of the majority of England's players here, who unlike the Dan Ackroyd character in the film, have struggled to come to terms with the repetitive slowness of the pitches and the wearying monotony of rain-drenched cricket grounds.

It is a point amplified by England's pathetic batting in the first innings of the last Test at Harare Sports Club. A performance that was simply unprofessional, given that it was their fourth encounter on that turgid surface.

England's main problem is that they are erratic, too often basing half-baked strategies upon sandy foundations. Atherton, like his predecessor Gooch, tends to lead by inspiration and perspiration, rather than force of personality. A method that is over-dependent upon the immediate form of the captain, which as we know – apart from the West Indies series of 1991 – is about the direst of Atherton's career.

When England have failed in the past, it was invariably because Atherton, a monolith of defiance, had failed too. Now that he cannot even get started (he scored 34 runs in four Test innings) his team are listing in seas where even the minnows like Zimbabwe have sharp teeth.

It would be unfair to dwell solely on the negatives of a Test series that was over before it really got going. By the same token, neither can positives be given the usual kite mark of approval without some misgivings about the strength of the opposition. Zimbabwe's bowling, with Paul Strang, is substantially better than their batting.

With that in mind, England can take heart from the maturing composure of John Crawley, who was the only batsman to remain unperturbed by the sluggish nature of the pitches: no mean feat when you play most of your county matches at Old Trafford, one of the truest and quickest surfaces in England.

Other assets emerged too, such as Robert Croft, a competitor as well as an off-spinner, likely to delight as many east, as west of the Severn bridge. His bristling combative qualities were shared by the likes of Darren Gough, Nick Knight and Nasser Hussain, as well as by old stagers like Alec Stewart.

It is eight years since England last drew a series abroad and even that was in New Zealand, their next opponents, and the only overseas side England have beaten over a series, since Mike Gatting retained the Ashes 10 years ago. If that urn is to return next summer, England must first convince a growing legion of sceptics and win well in New Zealand.

SECOND TEST (Harare): England 156 (G J Whittall 4-18, H H Streak 4-43) and 195 for 3 (A J Stewart 101no, G P Thorpe 50not) v Zimbabwe 215 (G W Flower 73, D Gough 4-40). Zimbabwe draw with England.

Clark accepts 'glorious' City challenge

Football
GUY HODGSON

The 1996-97 season has yet to reach its six months and Manchester City have appointed their fifth manager. Frank Clark, who left Nottingham Forest because he said he felt like a turkey waiting for Christmas, accepted the job that has become football's equivalent of the roasting tray when he took over at Maine Road yesterday.

Clark signed a three and a half year contract to replace Phil Neal, who had held the manager's position on a temporary basis since Steve Coppell resigned in November. Neal will leave City but a more shocking departure is that of first-team coach Tony Book, whose sacking ends a 30-year link with the club.

Clark, 53, took a training session yesterday morning and then attended a "meet the new manager" press conference that has become a regular fixture. "This is a glorious opportunity," he said. "I know that's been said many times before but a club that gets 30,000 to a game when it's fourth from the bottom of the First Division and takes 6,000 fans to an away game at Barnsley has massive potential. It doesn't sound like a job from hell to me."

Others might not agree. George Graham and Dave Bassett turned down the position and Coppell gave it up after 32 days, citing stress. In the last seven months City have been relegated from the Premiership, are in the First Division relegation zone and have won only two of their past 11 matches. Add £26m of debt, rumours of boardroom takeovers and the disruption of a new share issue, and the scale of Clark's task becomes apparent.

Maine Road's catalogue of chaos

THREE DECADES OF MANCHESTER CITY MANAGERS: 1965-71 Joe Mercer **1971-73** Malcolm Allison. **1973** Johnny Hart. **1973-74** Ron Saunders. **1974-79** Tony Book. **1979-80** Malcolm Allison. **1980-83** John Bond. **1983** John Benson. **1983-86** Billy McNeill. **1986-87** Jimmy Frizzell *(became general manager)*. **1987-89** Mel Machin. **1989-90** Howard Kendall. **1990-93** Peter Reid. **1993-95** Brian Horton. **1995-96** Alan Ball. **1996** Steve Coppell. **1996** Phil Neal. **1996** Frank Clark. *Caretaker managers not listed*

Eleven days after walking away from boardroom uncertainty at the City Ground, he was not deterred. "There's vast potential at the club," he said. "I know the supporters are fed up of hearing the word 'potential', but it is a club where, if you get it right, the sky is almost the limit.

"There'll be money to spend, and that's obviously a big help. I will be assessing the playing staff as quickly as possible. There's some very good players at Manchester City, players who have had a difficult time over the last nine months or so. Every player will be given a chance to show they can play a part here."

That money will come with the share issue which will raise £10.8m next month. Neal had asked to spend some of it but, when it became apparent he would not get the authorisation, his call for backing, paradoxically, moved the board in the opposite direction. Saturday's defeat at Barnsley hastened the process and the chairman, Francis Lee, had his holiday in the Caribbean interrupted to finalise Clark's appointment.

Being Manchester City, however, the transfer of power could not go entirely smoothly and Clark had to spend an embarrassing half-hour in his car outside the club's Platt Lane training ground yesterday morning while Neal cleared his desk.

Not that the departing man appeared to hold a grudge. "I had been in bed all day with flu since Saturday, when I got the call yesterday afternoon to meet representatives of the board," Neal said. "When I realised Frank was bringing his own management team, there was only one way forward.

"The SOS I had been sending out and my frankness may have played a part in getting some positive action on the managerial front for the long-term good of Manchester City. Maybe my words did not go down well in all quarters but that's the way I am. You get what you see. I wish Frank all the best and I'm just sorry it has not been possible for him to find a place for me."

There will be sadness among supporters, too, that no place is found on Clark's staff for Book, who was still referred to throughout the club as "Skip" in deference to his captaining the team to the championship in 1968, the FA Cup in 1969 and the European Cup-Winners' Cup in 1970.

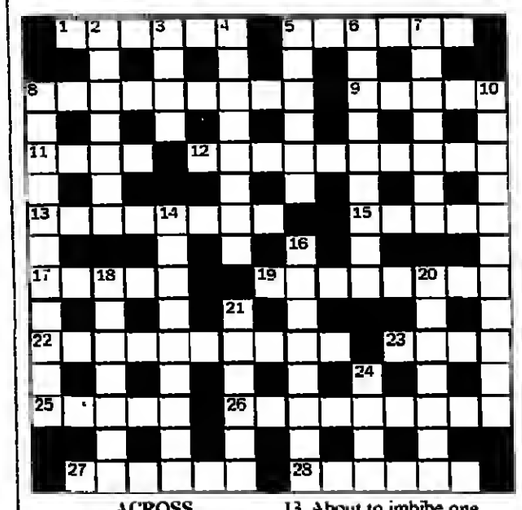
The 62-year-old also managed the club for five years in the 1970s and was in charge when they won their last major honour, the 1976 League Cup. He also guided City to the runners-up spot behind Liverpool in the old First Division in 1976-77 yet was demoted to allow the return of Malcolm Allison in 1979.

If Clark achieves anything close to those achievements, he will be lauded as a genius. Book's sacking was a shabby way to herald a new era.

Frank Clark at Maine Road yesterday Photograph: Empics

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3183. Tuesday 31 December By Portia



ACROSS
1 Prepare to be reconciled (4,2)
5 Soldiers right about number's being cut down (6)
8 It clearly protects food (5,4)
9 Way to accommodate family without money (5)
11 It fits round the middle window (4)
12 Ropy lot of players? (6,4)
13 About to imbibe one drink of wine (8)
15 Accepted duty towards tropical island (5)
17 Turn pale being without a means of transport (5)
19 Minor incident that attracts a fair crowd? (8)
22 Soundly rejected in every respect (10)
23 Sailor's back, operating out of Scottish port (4)
25 Firm has nothing in stock (5)
26 Unable to get off? (9)
27 Light energy is occupying old philosopher (6)
28 Initially, try to calm trapped river bird (6)

DOWN
2 Present number under discussion (2,5)
3 Therefore is found in the later gospels (4)
4 Pure soft metal brought in advance (8)
5 Continue to keep academic in check (6)
6 Possibly get ideas about new name (9)
7 Smart move ringing American in the USA (7)
8 Somehow crash twice and be out of European race (11)
10 Flipping childish games? (11)
14 Good uncle about old French dialect (6,3)
16 Number in control of conservation body prove hostile (8)
18 Refuse to leave key in lock-up (7)
20 Language society produces Christian book (7)
21 Preferred to order different ones (6)
24 Short of extra box (4)

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Everton move ends Phelan's misery

ALAN NIXON
AND RUPERT METCALF

Terry Phelan's unhappy spell at Chelsea is over. The 29-year-old Republic of Ireland left-back is joining Everton for £850,000 as a replacement for Andy Hinchcliffe, who is out for the season with a knee injury.

Phelan drove north last night to agree a three and a half-year contract. He has been unsettled since Ruud Gullit took over at Stamford Bridge, and could make his debut tomorrow against Blackburn – who are ready to let the versatile Paul Warhurst join Bolton Wanderers on loan.

Frank Clark's arrival at Manchester City means that Nigel Clough is likely to make his return to Nottingham Forest permanent – with the Northern Ireland goalkeeper Tommy Wright a candidate for a move in the opposite direction, possibly in exchange for Clough.

Reports from Belgrade yesterday suggested that Dejan Savicevic, Milan's Yugoslav international playmaker, may become a Manchester United player next year. The 30-year-old, who has won the European Cup with Red Star Belgrade and Milan, said that his "time with Milan is running out. All combinations are possible, but the most probable is that I'll join Manchester United next autumn." He also said that Monaco had made an offer. According to sources at Old Trafford, however, United have made no approach for the player.

Of greater concern to United is their defensive cover: Phil Neville has been ruled out for a month with glandular fever while Gary Pallister has aggravated a back injury and will be absent for at least a week.

United's former midfielder Paul Ince is in trouble again in Italy. He has been suspended for four *Serie A* games following his third red card of the season – against Reggiana on 22 December. Another Old Trafford old boy, the Middlesbrough player-manager Bryan Robson, may have to play at Arsenal tomorrow because of his side's injury crisis. Robson, 40 next month, has not played for a year.

Jim Duffy has resigned as manager of Dundee to take charge of Hibernian. He replaces Jocky Scott, who had been in charge at Easter Road since Alex Miller's resignation in September. Dundee's new manager is Duffy's former assistant, John McCormack.

The Arsenal forward Chris Kiwomya has joined the French club Le Havre on loan for six months. The 27-year-old cost £1.25m from Ipswich last year.